Business / B1

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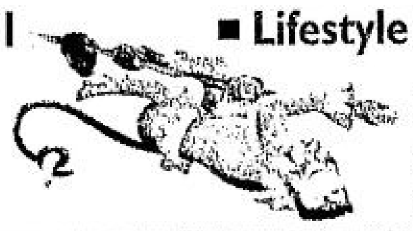

Lifestyle / D1

Mirth, girth and the art of wit

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ROCO/ A5

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SMALL/ A22

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email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Monday, April 12, 2004 ★★ 88 pages / 10 sections / vol. 19 / no. 124 P18

website: www.inq7.net

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By Amando Doronila

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By Volt Contreras

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"Running Peace" is a compilation of

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Of the original 53 inmates who staged the escape, 20 have been recaptured while eight were killed in shoot-outs, officials said.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, Armed Forces information officer, said the military had warned the jail officials that the Abu Sayyaf suspects were planning to escape and asked that additional guards be posted, the Associated Press said.

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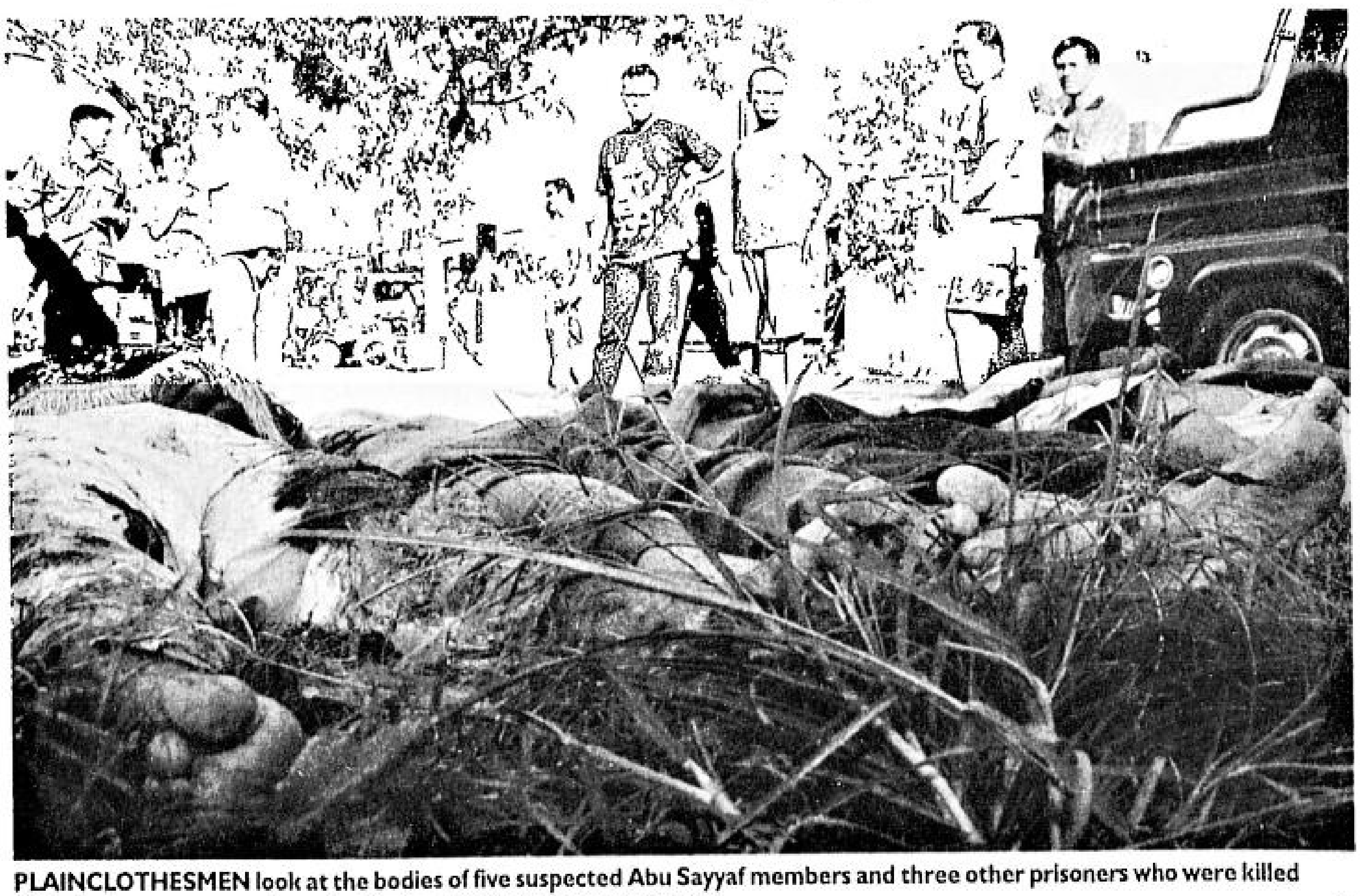
JAIL OFFICIALS/ A20



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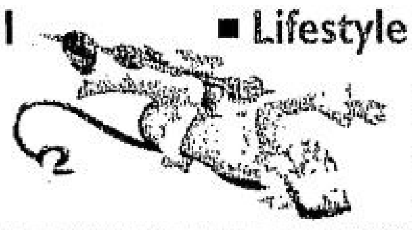

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EPA

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Bicol Region, Central and Eastern Visayas and northern and eastern sections of Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rains.
SOURCE. PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA. PDI RESEARCH/04/12/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second **FRONTPAGE**

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

US behind anti-terror drive, says NY Times

THE PHILIPPINE government's heightened counter-terrorism drive may have something to do with the warning given three weeks ago by the United States, United Kingdom and Australia that it had not done enough to crack down on terrorist groups in the country.

In an article published yesterday, The New York Times said envoys from the three countries had delivered the "diplomatic reproach" to President Macapagal-Arroyo last March 21.

Malacañang's response has not been made public, but the Times quoted National Security Adviser Norbert Gonzales as saying, "I think they have changed their position by now."

Sources at the Department of Foreign Affairs said Washington, London and Canberra also threatened to issue travel advisories against the Philippines if no sufficient moves were made to track down and round up the terrorists.

According to the Times, the US portion of the reproach was similar to the one delivered to the Indonesian government weeks before the Bali bomb attacks in October 2002. *Jerome Aning*

Doubts raised on gov't will vs tax credit scam

By Michelle V. Remo

DOUBTS remain that the government is not serious in running after people involved in tax credit scams that cost it billions of pesos.

After key witnesses to the tax credit scam involving the Chingkoe group of companies decried their alleged "burning" to prevent the cases from prospering, two possible witnesses in the second-biggest tax scam have expressed disappointment over the slow movement of cases against the Tan family.

"It's been four years, and nothing has happened," said Rose (not her real name).

Rose said she was willing to serve as a witness in the cases against the Tans. She is privy to the tax credit scam involving garments firm Mannequin International Corp. and other companies owned by the Tans.

Records from the One-Stop Shop Duty and Credit Drawback Center, a unit of the Department of Finance responsible for processing tax credit applications, showed that Mannequin International duped the government of P133 million by fraudulently applying for tax credits in the 1990s.

Earlier investigations revealed that Mannequin International applied for tax credits using fake documents. Mannequin International misrepresented itself as a garments exporter to claim tax credits.

Tax credits, which are represented by a tax credit certificate (TCC), are granted mostly to exporting firms as an incentive for their dollar contributions to the country. Companies benefit from the tax credits either by deducting them from their tax or tariff liabilities, or by selling the TCCs.

After discovering the fraudulent activities of Mannequin International, the OSS referred the case to the Special Presidential Task Force 156 (SPTF) in 2000. But since then, no criminal case has been filed against the company owners.

Mannequin International was headed by the Tan matriarch Genoveva Tan. Other owners of the company included sons Julio Tan Jr. and Melchor Tan, and Blanquita Tan, the wife of Melchor. It was incorporated in 1987 and closed down in 1998.

Fictitious names

All firms reportedly owned by the Tans accounted for more than P1 billion worth of fake tax credits. The companies shut down in the late 1990s after the OSS conducted an investigation.

"To evade authorities, they (Tans) registered other company names and used fictitious names as owners," said Mike (also not his real name). Mike said he could serve as a witness if the government enrolled him in the witness protection program.

Rose and Mike said other companies owned by the Tans included Nippon East Knitting Corp., Integrated Mutli Cotton Mills Inc., Kultura Knitex Corp., Filipino Way Industries Inc. and Scope Industries.

"With all these companies engaged in tax credit scams, it is questionable why no case has yet prospered," Mike said.

He added that SPTF filed a case in 2000 against Scope Industries.

"But the case filed by the SPTF was against people whose names are fictitious. How can we expect the case to prosper?" Mike said. The registered owners of Scope Industries were Angelo Jimenez, Bernard Santos, Jaime Sia Ling, Wilhelmina Ang Ling, Albert Sia Ling, Wilber Sia Ling, and Vinalyn Sia Ling.

SPTF Executive Director Alan Ventura said his office was in the process of gathering more evidence against Mannequin International and other garment firms involved in tax credit scams.

Ventura said the SPTF was in fact set to file cases against two companies for tax credit fraud in the next two weeks.

Smear campaign

He said the SPTF was not merely depending on records provided by the OSS in filing tax credit fraud cases. "Whatever is said against it is part of a smear campaign," he said.

Since assuming his post at the SPTF in June 2002, Ventura said his office had filed cases against 10 companies, including Texasia, which fraudulently used about P80 million worth of tax credits.

The Tans account for the second-biggest tax credit scam after the Chingkoes. The companies owned by the Chinngkoe couple Faustino and Gloria accounted for more than half of the P5.3 billion in tax credits fraudulently used in the 1990s.

Last month, tax scam witness Rosita L. Chingkoe charged before the Office of the Ombudsman top officials of the SPTF for malicious prosecution, gross ignorance of the law and grave abuse of discretion. The case was filed after the SPTF included her as a respondent to the case she was helping pursue.

Rosita was witness in the case against New Alliance Co., which was owned by Faustino and Gloria.

Rosita is the wife of Felix Chingkoe, also a tax scam witness against the couple Faustino and Gloria Chingkoe. Felix is Faustino's brother.

Rosita's filing of charges against SPTF officials followed the filing of the same charges against the same people by Rodrigo Garcia, who was also a witness against the Chingkoe group of companies. Both Rosita and Garcia criticized the alleged burning of witnesses to prevent tax fraud cases from prospering.

Business
hp

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Every purchase of HP Proliant ML150 from February 15 to April 15, 2004, entitles the company to join the raffle promotion. Company must register the serial no. of HP Proliant ML150 in the webpage www.hp.com/ph/ml150 • 2 winners will be drawn through computer-generated system. First prize is an HP Proliant ML150 and second prize is an HP iPAQ h2210 Pocket PC. Prizes can be claimed at the HP office 37/F Robinsons Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Please contact Nikka Singson-Abes at 888-5900.

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FILIPINOS, mostly women domestic helpers, form a long line outside the Bayanihan Kennedy Town Center in Hong Kong for the historic start of absentee voting for the May 10 elections.

DANTE PERALTA/PINOY ABROAD

Land-based absentee voting starts abroad

By Jerome Aning

ABSENTEE voting for some 355,000 land-based Filipinos overseas began yesterday, with polling centers in embassies and consulates in various countries in the Eastern Hemisphere reporting a few hundred voters.

In Hong Kong, which has about 90,000 registered absentee voters, the Philippine consulate general reported that some 200 people cast their ballots. Philippine diplomatic posts in the Middle East region also reported scores of voters.

The absentee voters have up to May 10 to cast their ballots for president, vice president, 12 senators and one party-list representative. Voting for Filipino seamen began a month ago.

Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Rafael Seguis said everything was in place for overseas absentee voting, which he called the agency's biggest challenge.

"We cannot overemphasize the importance of this political exercise and our historic role in ensuring the integrity of the OAV process. Only then can we significantly contribute in renewing our people's faith in the electoral process and upholding our democratic traditions," he said.

Seguis, chair of the DFA's OAV Secretariat, called on Filipinos overseas to cast their ballots early to avoid inconvenience. He added that he would be keeping in touch with the Commission on Elections for any problem that might arise.

The precincts opened at 8 a.m. yesterday, Manila time. The first voting center opened in Wellington, New Zealand, which is four hours ahead of Philippines, followed by those in Agana, Guam; Saipan in the Northern Marianas, and Canberra and Sydney in Australia.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, Manila time, all seven countries and territories having more than 10,000 voters have opened. Saudi Arabia has the biggest number of absentee voters, with at least 96,800 people expected to cast their ballots in Riyadh, Jeddah, Al-Khobar and other satellite voting centers.

The last voting center to open was at 2 a.m. today, Manila time, in Honolulu, Hawaii.

According to the OAVS, eight voting centers which have more than 10,000 registered voters each are: Hong Kong, Riyadh, Jeddah, Singapore, Al-Khobar, Kuwait, Rome and Abu Dhabi.

Voters in the United Kingdom, Japan and Canada would send their ballots by mail. The rest would have to go personally to the voting centers to cast their ballots.

The oldest reported voter is 83-year-old Frank Catajoy, a Filipino World War II veteran living in Kobe City, Japan, who arrived as part of the Allied occupation force in August 1945.

OAVS vice chair Catherine Maceda earlier told reporters that satellite and field voting centers would be set up to facilitate balloting. One satellite voting center had been set up in the Iraqi city of al-Hillah for the 96 members of the Filipino humanitarian contingent.

The ballot boxes would remain in the voting stations until the last vote is cast. All over the world, voting centers will close at 3 p.m., Manila time. The ballots would be counted manually and the results immediately transmitted to the Commission on Elections office in Manila.

Maceda said a total of some 3,000 people have been deployed to man more than 1,000 special boards of election inspectors, special ballot reception and custody groups, and boards of canvassers in 81 Philippine embassies, consulates and accredited offices worldwide.

Foreign service personnel and volunteers of the Filipino communities would be serving as inspectors, canvassers and ballot receivers and custodians.

'We didn't expect this many'

By Agnes E. Donato and Norman Bordadora

SAIPAN, Northern Marianas—Filipino voters here trooped to the polls early and kept Philippine consulate personnel busy yesterday.

Ricardo Bautista, a consular assistant at the Philippine Consulate in this US jurisdiction, said people started coming in 30 minutes before the precincts opened at 9 a.m. At 12 noon, over 100 voters had already cast their ballots.

"We didn't expect this many people to come on the first day. They're obviously very excited about being able to participate in the elections," Bautista noted.

There are a total of 6,995 registered Filipino voters in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, where approximately one-third of the 60,000-population are Filipinos.

For the first time, Filipino voters overseas are allowed to participate in the Philippine elections, following the enactment of the Overseas Absentee Voting Act of 2003.

Absentee voters may vote for president, vice president, 12 senators, and one party-list representative. The election period for sea-based voters started on March 10 while that for land-based voters began yesterday.

Zenaida Mirasol, who works as a school janitor, said she was happy about the enactment of the absentee voting law, as it gave migrant workers like her the opportunity to participate in her country's electoral process. She voted for Fernando Poe Jr. because, she said, "He would understand the needs of ordinary people like me."

Emma Nicolas, 53, said she decided to cast her vote on the first day because she did not want to be caught in the rush as the voting period nears its end. She refused to reveal whom she voted for but said she prayed for guidance before she filled out her ballot.

Interviewed while waiting for his turn to vote, Elmer Icatlo, 46, said he had yet to decide between presidential candidates Raul Roco, a former senator and former education secretary, and Panfilo Lacson, an incumbent senator and former chief of the Philippine National Police.

"I'll make my decision at the voting booth," Icatlo said.

He said he was most concerned about corruption in the Philippine government, and he would like the next president to address it.

Because this seems to be a major concern for OFWs, Lacson, who's running on an anti-corruption platform, is confident he would get most of the overseas votes.

"I can beat them all in Saudi Arabia," said Lacson. The oil-rich kingdom has 96,000 overseas Filipinos registered as absentee voters, the biggest so far. Lacson added that he also has a strong support base in Hong Kong, which has 90,000 registered absentee voters, the second biggest.

His strong showing among OFWs in Saudi Arabia has almost prompted Malacañang to recall Ambassador Bahnarim Guinomla. The diplomat was summoned to the Palace to explain his alleged support for the opposition senator.

Lacson described his supporters in Saudi Arabia: "They are very dedicated and active. Their presence and organization are very strong."

Bida ka Pinoy!

Dear Celia,

Kumusta na? Miss na miss ko na kayong lahat. Hinahanap-hanap ko ang masarap mong lutuin, ang kakulitan ni Junior... ang pamamasyal natin sa magagandang lugar. Hay, malungkot talaga dito.

Buti na lang nagkakasama kami ng ating mga kapwa Pinoy dito at nagvivideoke gamit ang Magic Sing PREMIUM na may WOW Philippines picture backgrounds. Ngayon, para na rin akong nasa 'Pinas.

Bilib nga ang mga puti at ibang foreigners eh. Kala kasi nila puro bundok ang 'Pinas. Eh kita naman nila, ganda talaga ng bayan natin. Salamat sa Magic Sing PREMIUM, ngayon taas noo kaming mga Pinoy! Syempre, bida ang mga Pinoy sa kantahan! He..he..he.

Oo nga pala Mahal, abangan mo ang monthly draws at grand draw ng Magic Sing Win & Fly promo, ha. Baka manalo tayo ng local trip for 2 sa Cebu, Bohol, Palawan o kaya Davao. Lalo na sa grand draw, sa July 14, Asian tour package for 2 naman. Ready ka lang, ha! Korea, here we come!

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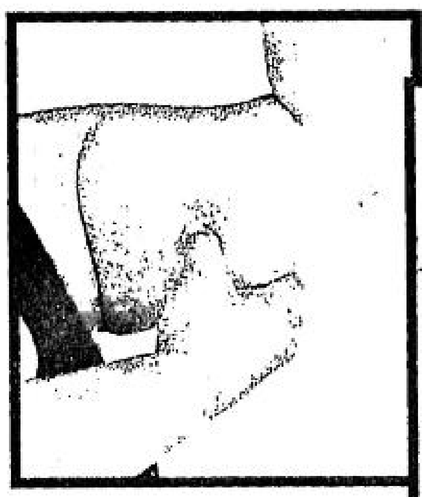

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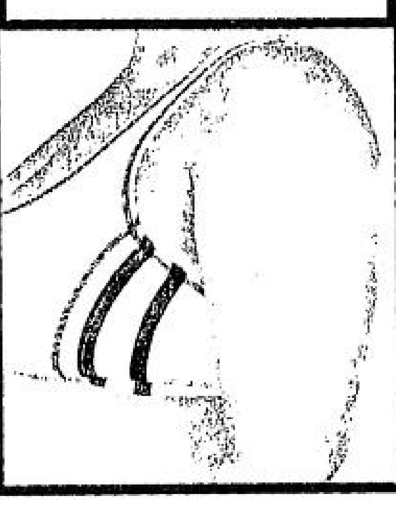

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Bishop makes not-too-subtle endorsement of FPJ

By Carlito Pablo

CATHOLIC Bishop Teodoro Bacani made a not-too-subtle endorsement of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. during the Easter Mass celebration of the El Shaddai movement early dawn Sunday.

Bacani, spiritual adviser of the purportedly eight-million strong Catholic group, called on the El Shaddai faithful to "vote for change" in the May 10 elections.

Poe attended the celebration with wife Susan, running mate Sen. Loren Legarda, and most of his senatorial candidates.

Bacani likened the "persecution" of Poe when his Filipino citizenship was questioned before the Commission on Elections and Supreme Court to the agony of Jesus Christ.

"Like Christ, why should a man whose only intention is to serve his fellowman be punished?" Bacani said during his homily before an estimated 500,000 crowd gathered at the Amvel Business Park in Parañaque.

Bacani also referred to an unnamed "Mr. Kurakot" as a "traitor like Judas" who turned his back on the people and "betrayed their clamor for change and a better life."

"Choose Christ over Judas," Bacani exhorted El Shaddai members.

"Who would you choose to be your next leader, Christ or Judas?" Bacani said.

Bacani also said: "You should not allow yourselves to be fooled again by the Judases in our midst."

BACANI

Addressing the El Shaddai faithful in Filipino, Poe said that the movement's Easter celebration is "very much different from the other celebrations I have experienced in the past."

"I am hoping that we will be together again in giving praise to the Lord in the days ahead," Poe said.

Poe also took part in El Shaddai rituals like the waiving of white handkerchiefs, a practice said to bring good luck.

"My wife Susan Roces Poe and I, together with our teammates, thank you for this privilege to be with you in celebrating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus," Poe said.

But El Shaddai denies leaning against GMA

EL SHADDAI spokesperson Mel Robles yesterday refused to say whether the presence of opposition presidential bets Fernando Poe Jr. and Panfilo Lacson meant that the Catholic charismatic group was leaning against the candidacy of President Macapagal.

Robles confirmed though that it was the El Shaddai that extended the invitation to Poe's Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino to join the group in its overnight Easter Sunday gathering.

There were reports that the El Shaddai's members in show business had worked for Poe's invitation to the resurrection Mass and traditional *salubungan* at dawn.

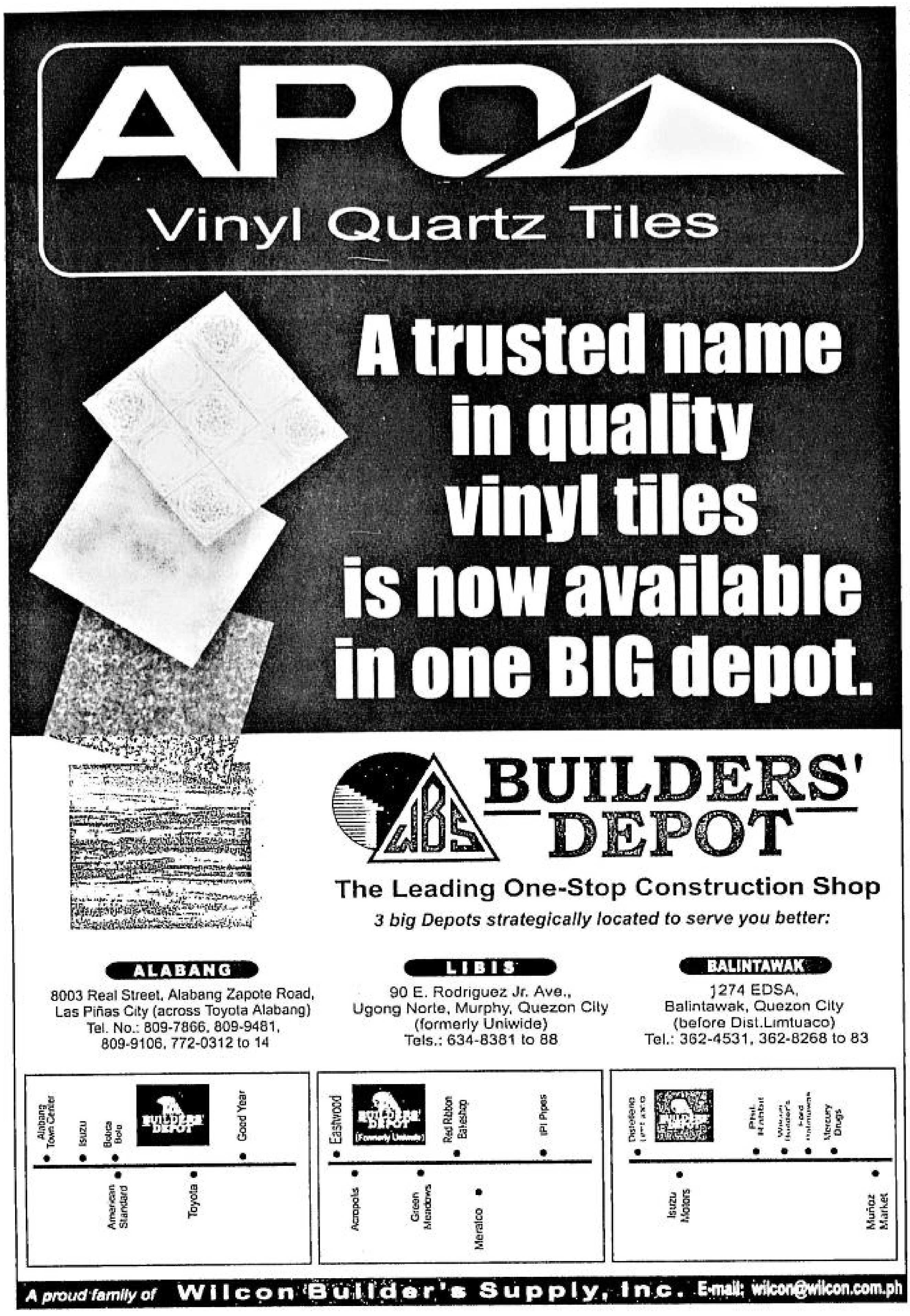
El Shaddai boasts of more than one million highly visible members here. While it has been touted to vote as a bloc, following the endorsement of its leader Mike Velarde, experts said that there is no proven religious bloc vote even among conservatives like the Iglesia ni Cristo.

Velarde has said earlier that he would not endorse any candidate yet because he has not seen any "alternative" option or someone who has met his criteria of competence, proven track record and sincerity in leading the country.

Velarde, however, endorsed former President Joseph Estrada in the 1998 elections.

Oops! It's Rosales, not CBCP

IN yesterday's front-page story, the headline of "Popular vote not always responsible choice" should have been attributed to Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, not the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines. We sincerely regret the error.



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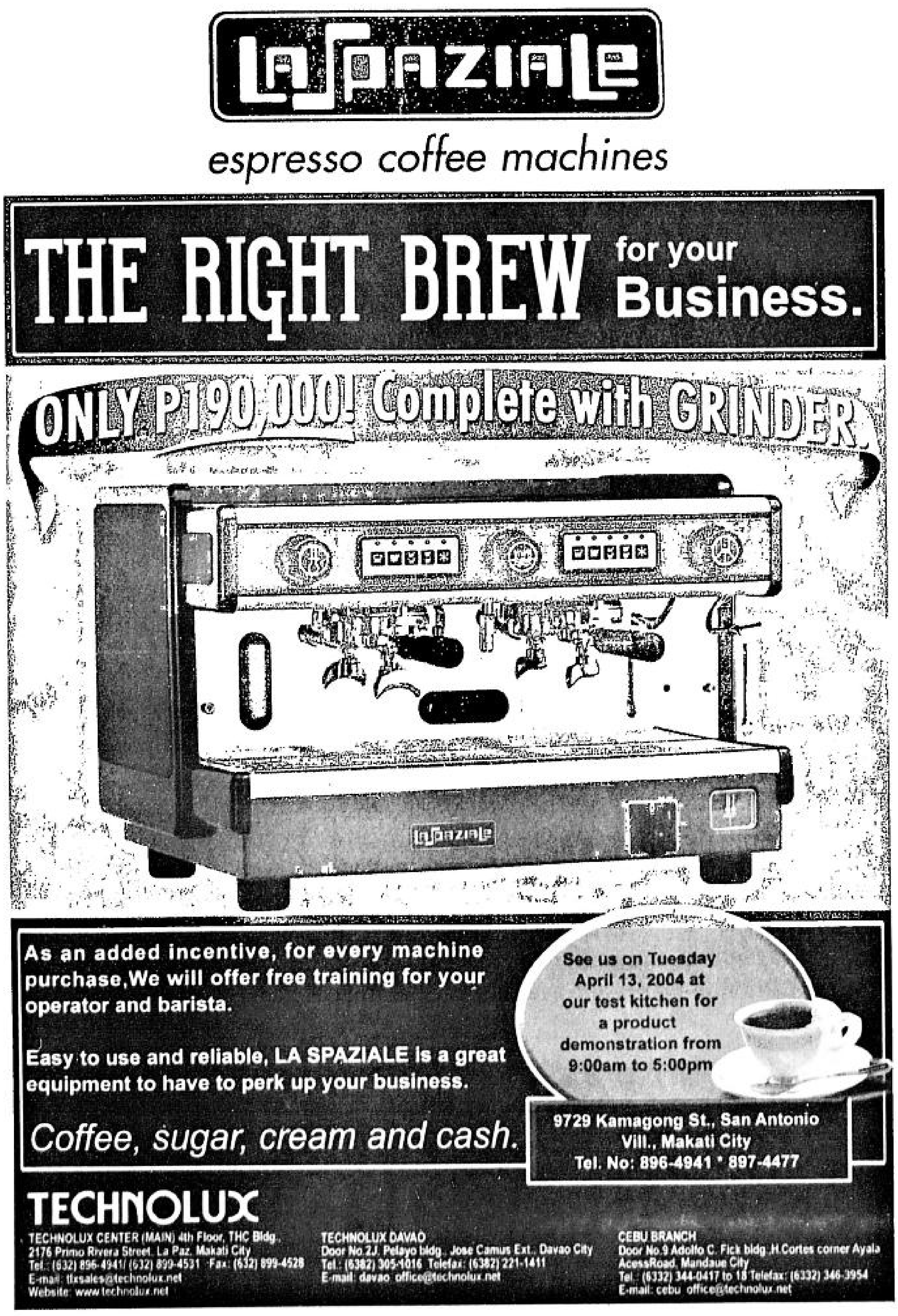
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FPJ, Ping make another bid to unify opposition

From page A1

with financial problems. The Poe campaign is also undergoing reorganization.

Poe has designated Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay as his new overall campaign manager, replacing Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III.

Before being named to his new post, Binay served as Metro Manila chair of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP).

Once dubbed a "tsunami" of a presidential candidate by his allies, the popular actor has failed to pull away from President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is seeking a full six-year term. Poe, the KNP standard-bearer, is running neck and neck with Ms Macapagal.

A source said Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta called up on Wednesday her brother Butz Aquino to arrange the meeting. Oreta is backing Poe while Aquino is supporting Lacson.

Guest

Poe was a guest at the El Shaddai gathering that started on Saturday evening in Parañaque City, staying up to 2 a.m. the next day. Lacson arrived at the El Shaddai event at about 4 a.m. *(See related stories on Page A4.)*

Even before the Velarde-arranged meeting between Poe and Lacson, an insider in the KNP revealed several weeks ago that the popular leader of the charismatic group was working out a meeting between the two.

Before the El Shaddai gathering over the weekend, Velarde had met with Lacson, who told the El Shaddai founder that he would not withdraw, according to a source close to both the Lacson and Poe camps.

Velarde told Lacson that it was better for the two rival presidential candidates to talk by themselves, the source said.

Originally, Sen. Loren Legarda, Poe's running mate, was supposed to be at the meeting, but Poe decided against it at the last meeting, according to the source.

The source said Legarda was willing to give up her vice presidential candidacy and just run for senator.

Strategist

A source from the Binay camp said there were adjustments in the FPJ campaign organization. "FPJ will make the appropriate announcement at the proper time," the source from the Binay group said.

The source said Binay would "lead the overall campaign machinery, presiding over strategy and tactics."

"Even before this, FPJ has been regularly consulting Mayor Binay," the source said. "FPJ must have seen that Binay has been making an impressive job as KNP regional chair for Metro Manila."

KNP media bureau chief Rodolfo Reyes confirmed that Binay had been designated as the "overall campaign manager" of the Poe-led opposition.

Reyes, however, qualified that Sotto did not resign as campaign manager because the senator had never assumed the position in the KNP.

"Senator Sotto is a member of a collegial body which is the executive committee in charge of the campaign," Reyes said.

At best, according to Reyes, Sotto's previous designation as "campaign manager" was unclear. Sotto had been described in media reports as Poe's "personal campaign manager" even before the start of official campaign period on Feb. 10. This was reinforced by the presence of Sotto at Poe's side in campaign sorties.

Excom members

Reyes said the members of the committee in charge of the KNP campaign included Binay, Angara, Morales and outgoing Senators Oreta and Gregorio Honasan.

"The post of overall campaign manager is a new creation by the executive committee," Reyes said. "As far as I know, it was created only a few days ago."

Sources in the opposition said Sotto would remain literally at the side of Poe as the near equivalent of a "road manager."

Sotto, who has been a drum beater of Poe even before the actor declared his intention to run for President, left for the United States before the Holy Week.

When sought for comment, opposition reelectionist Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said: "What I heard was that Jojo Binay took over only two days ago."

"My guess is that Binay, who is a veteran in local politics having been mayor of Makati for a number of years, will be in close coordination with KNP local leaders," Pimentel said.

Pimentel and Binay belong to the PDP-Laban, of which Binay is the national chair.

The PDP-Laban is one of three major parties comprising the KNP. The rest are the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino of Angara and Sotto, and the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino of Estrada. The PMP is headed by Morales.

Chinese-Filipino support

Unlike Poe, Lacson appears not to be facing financial problems, partly because of support from the Chinese-Filipino community, many of whose members were rescued from kidnap syndicates.

A recent fund-raising dinner for Lacson, held at the Century Seafood Garden in Malate, Manila, reportedly netted P10.5 million at P10,000 a plate from guests and supporters, who are mostly Chinese-Filipino businessmen.

Asked in an earlier interview to identify his supporters, Lacson said: "I better not give their names. They might be pressured to stop their contributions."

Lacson and his political strategists conducted a "strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats" assessment and planning meeting in the middle of Holy Week before plunging into the Lenten break.

Both Aquino and Remulla said the sessions indicated Lacson could afford to push through with his presidential bid even in the wake of the candidate's dismal showing in pre-election surveys.

Both the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia consistently place Lacson at fourth place behind Poe, Ms Macapagal and former Education Secretary Raul Roco.

Roco . . .

From page A1

party mates: "There's no truth to the rumors. There are no negotiations happening. Nobody has called or talked to me."

Campaign manager Jaime Galvez-Tan said this was what Roco told his running mate Herminio Aquino and Alyansa's seven senatorial candidates when he met them for two hours behind closed doors at his La Vista subdivision home in Quezon City.

Roco called the meeting to devise new strategies as the campaign for the May 10 election headed into its final 30 days with the former education secretary struggling a distant third in opinion polls behind opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. and President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Thomas was a biblical figure who refused to believe that Christ had risen from the dead until Jesus told his skeptical disciple to touch the wounds he suffered when he was crucified.

Fight continues

"Nothing of that sort (a Roco withdrawal) is happening. We will continue running," senatorial candidate Melanio "Batas" Mauricio recalled Roco as telling the meeting.

Roco's party mates, on their part, expressed their determination to press ahead with the campaign until "victory is achieved," Galvez-Tan told the INQUIRER.

"The meeting ended very well. Everyone was happy, ecstatic and felt victorious."

Mauricio said the meeting agreed "to pursue our campaign more vigorously ... to cover (as many) more areas as possible, and bring the message of hope."

The meeting was not open to media coverage.

Roco and his entire ticket also agreed that the Macapagal camp had instigated the rumors, through text messaging and e-mail, in time for today's start of overseas voting.

"These were calculated for tomorrow's overseas voting," Galvez-Tan said. "The administration camp wants to capitalize on overseas voting to sow chaos and confusion among them."

Roco himself told the INQUIRER on the phone that his campaign "is still dedicated to the young and the poor," a hint that his sorties in public markets and impoverished villages will continue.

He shrugged off the results of a recent Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey which showed that if he withdrew from the race, 5.6 percent of his voters would switch over to the Ms Macapagal and 4.3 percent to Poe.

"I've never been trusting of surveys. It doesn't matter anymore," he said.

Repackaging images

Yesterday's meeting also tackled the need to repackage the candidates' messages, fortify the senatorial candidates' support in their home provinces and consolidate forces in Metro Manila, Alyansa's perceived bailiwick but where Roco's voter approval ratings appeared to have slipped, based on opinion surveys.

"That's not true. *Ka grabe gud ana* (That's terrible)," former Cebu Gov. Emilio "Lito" Osmeña said, squelching rumors that he met Roco in Tagbilaran City in Bohol on Tuesday and discussed a supposed Roco withdrawal.

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Pimentel says gov't laying ground for massive poll fraud

By Carlito Pablo

TWO SENATORIAL candidates of the opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino yesterday charged that the Macapagal administration has laid the ground for massive fraud in the May 10 elections.

Reelectionist Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said that their camp had "documented proof" that a number of voters' lists had been "bloated" to justify the padding of votes in favor of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"There has been a noted but unjustifiable increase in the number of voters in a number of areas in the country," Pimentel said. "We believe this is where the administration will get the votes for GMA."

In a separate interview, KNP senatorial candidate Ernesto Herrera said that ballot boxes are reportedly prepared for switching come election time.

"We were even told that in the President's home province of Pampanga, ballot boxes have already been stuffed and readied for switching in order to completely shut out the opposition," Herrera said.

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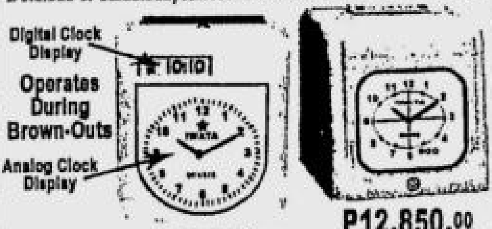

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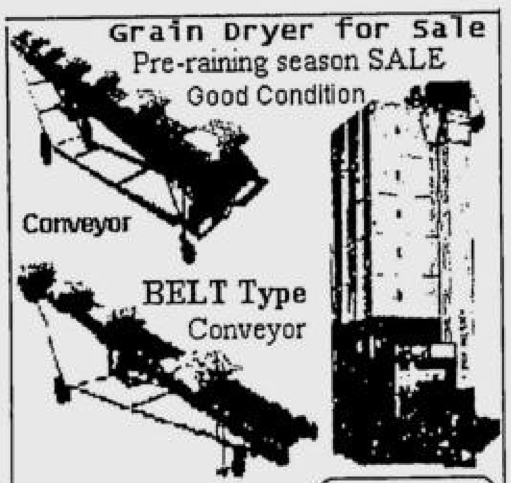

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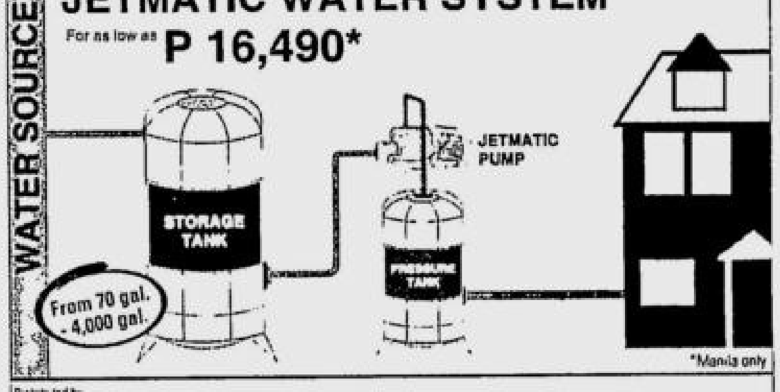

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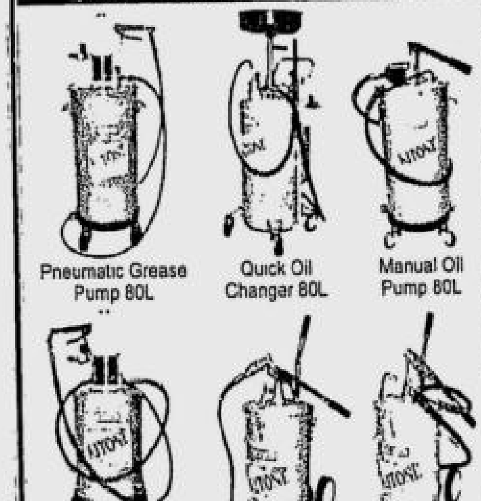

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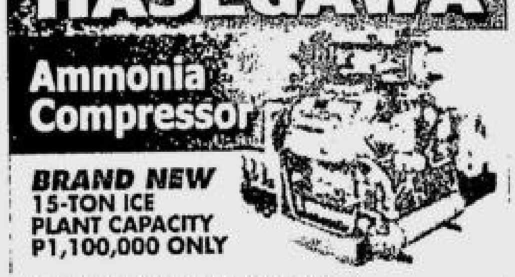

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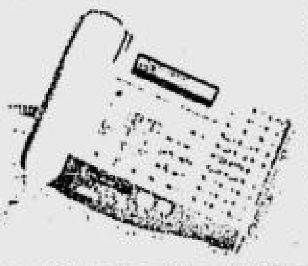

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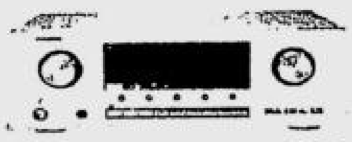

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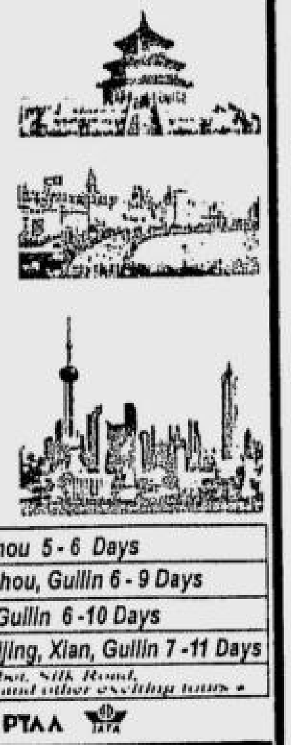

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POEA clears backlog

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE PHILIPPINE Overseas Employment Administration has finally cleared its backlog of some 7,000 cases, some of them pending for the past 21 years.

The only complaints remaining with the POEA's adjudication division were the ones filed last year, POEA Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz said.

About 80 percent of the 7,000 cases were recruitment violations filed by overseas Filipino workers who have been duped by recruitment firms either through false contracts or excessive placement fees.

Of the backlog, three cases dated back to 1987 and the rest were from 1991. Many complainants have given up hope that the government would ever decide on their case, the POEA chief admitted.

"I do not know whether it is a compliment or not, but some of the complainants were surprised that the POEA even issued a decision on their case because it has been so long," Baldoz said in an earlier interview.

She said that the adjudication division initially told her that there were only a backlog of 3,500 cases, but it turned out that those were only the cases pending before the hearing officers. Another 4,000 were up for review.

Baldoz said that the legal officers cited the lack of logistical support and monitoring system under previous administrations, saying they acted only on those cases that were being followed up. Some cases had been untouched by previous administrations who had probably maintained sacred cows.

"This only proves that there is a way of dispensing justice expeditiously," Baldoz said.

The conciliation division of the POEA has also reduced the number of cases being filed as POEA arbitrators try to work out an extrajudicial settlement between the complainants and recruitment companies.

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He is survived by wife Cleofas ("Paz"/ "Opa"), sister Epen Macapagal, children Roling, Redy, Renato, Rebing, Rozaida, Vie, Roland and their spouses, and grandchildren.

His remains lie at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Balintawak, Caloocan City, after a Mass at 1 p.m.

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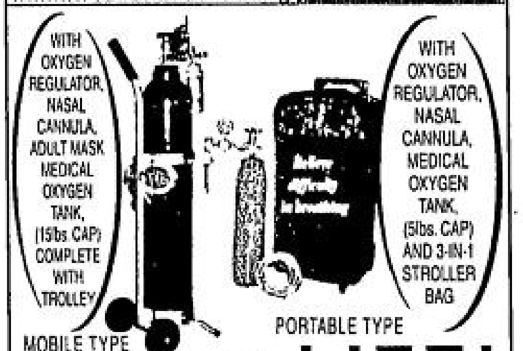

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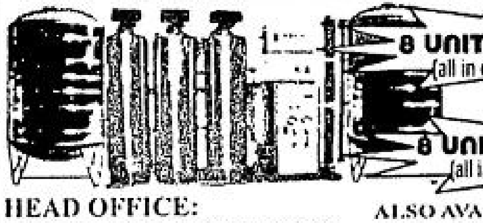

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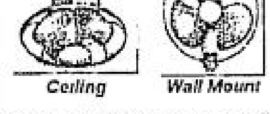

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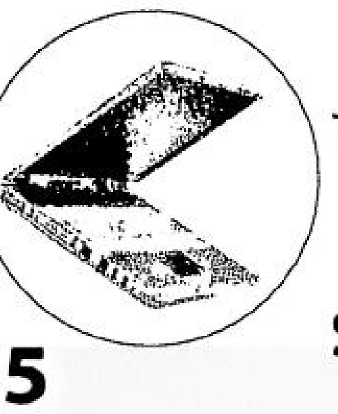

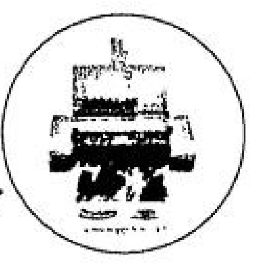

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Pre-9/11 memo to Bush warned of al-Qaida plots

CRAWFORD, Texas—President George W. Bush was told more than a month before the Sept. 11 attacks that al-Qaida had reached America's shores, had a support system in place for its operatives and that the FBI had detected suspicious activity that might involve a hijacking plot.

Since 1998, the FBI had observed "patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks," according to a memo prepared for Bush and declassified Saturday.

Presidential aides and outside experts said they could not recall a sitting president publicly releasing the highly sensitive document, known as a PDB, for presidential daily briefing.

The Aug. 6, 2001, PDB referred to evidence of buildings in New York possibly being cased by terrorists.

The document also said the CIA and FBI were investigating a call to the US Embassy in the United Arab Emirates in May 2001 "saying that a group of (Osama) bin Laden supporters was in the US planning attacks with explosives."

The commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks asked the White House to declassify the document at its meeting Thursday. It is significant because Bush read it, so it offers a window on what Bush and his top aides knew about the threat of a terrorist strike.

The PDB made plain that Bin Laden had been scheming to strike the United States for at least six years. It warned of indications from a broad array of sources, spanning several years.

Democratic commissioner Bob Kerrey, a former US senator, said the memo's details should have given Bush enough warning to push for more intelligence information about possible domestic hijackings.

"The whole argument the government used that we were focusing overseas, that we thought the attack was coming from outside the United States—this memo said an attack could come in the United States. And we didn't scramble our agencies to that," he said.

RICE testifying before the independent commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks April 8 in Washington. AP

Richard Ben-Veniste, a Democratic commissioner, said the memo calls into question national security adviser Condoleezza Rice's assertion last week that the memo was purely a "historical" document.

"This is a provocative piece of information and warrants further exploration as to what was done following the receipt of this information to enhance our domestic security," he said.

Senior US administration officials said Bush saw more than 40 mentions of al-Qaida in his daily intelligence updates during the first eight months of his presidency. The CIA prepared the document "in response to questions asked by the president about the possibility of attacks by al-Qaida inside the US," one said.

But the senior officials refused to say what Bush's response to the memo was.

Republican commissioner James R. Thompson, a former state governor, said the memo "didn't call for anything to be done by him." *Reuters*

Whereabouts of Japan hostages unconfirmed

TOKYO—Neither the whereabouts nor the safety of three Japanese civilians kidnapped in Iraq have been confirmed, a Japanese diplomat said in Amman on Sunday, hours after their families had hoped they would be released.

"There has not been confirmation of the facts about the current whereabouts of the three Japanese. There is also no confirmation of their safety," Senior Vice Foreign Minister Ichiro Aisawa told a news conference in the Jordanian capital.

"We're making efforts toward the earliest possible release of the three Japanese," Aisawa said, adding that Japan was keeping in close contact with relevant countries.

Relatives of the hostages, who had been cheered by earlier reports the three would be freed, grew anxious after a hoped-for release around midday failed to materialize.

"We're not getting any concrete information from anywhere.

Are they really going to come back?" a tearful Naoko Imai, the mother of 18-year-old Noriaki, told reporters.

Other relatives echoed her anguish.

"Please help. Please help my son," said Kimiko Koriyama, the mother of freelance reporter Soichiro.

Arabic television station Al Jazeera had reported that the militants holding the hostages would free them in response to a call from the Muslim Clerics Association in Iraq.

The group had originally threatened to "burn them alive"

unless Japanese troops were pulled from Iraq within three days.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, facing his toughest political test, has vowed not to withdraw Japan's nearly 550 ground troops from southern Iraq, despite the threats.

US Vice President Dick Cheney, now in Tokyo for the start of a three-nation tour, is expected to urge Koizumi to stay the course when he meets the Japanese leader on Monday.

Japan was stunned on Thursday when a previously unknown group released a video showing the three, blindfolded and with a gun to their heads.

The hostages are Imai, who had planned to look into the effects of depleted uranium weapons; aid worker Nahoko Takato, 34; and Koriyama, 32.

Several foreigners have been killed, kidnapped or gone missing in Iraq over the past week, putting pressure on US allies including Japan, Britain, Spain and Italy. *Reuters*

US helicopter downed by hostile fire in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A US Apache gunship was downed Sunday by hostile fire west of Baghdad, a hotbed of rebels fighting against the occupation of Iraq, and the fate of the crew was still unknown, a coalition spokesperson said.

"A 1st Cavalry AH-64 helicopter was downed by unknown ground fire west of Baghdad at 11:05 a.m.," the spokesperson said.

"The condition of the crew is unknown," he added.

The AH-64 Apache is a twin-engine attack helicopter which normally carries a crew of two.

Regions west of Baghdad have been bastions of Sunni Muslim insurgents leading a relentless campaign of hit-and-run attacks against the US-led coalition and its Iraqi allies.

A total of nine US helicopters have been shot down by insurgents in Iraq since coalition forces invaded the country and ousted the regime of Saddam Hussein in April 2003. *AFP*

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Truce brings calm to Fallujah

FALLUJAH, Iraq—Intense efforts by Iraqi leaders to arrange a truce in Fallujah brought calm to the town's battered streets on Sunday after a week of fighting between US forces and rebels killed hundreds of Iraqis.

Hundreds of desperate people streamed out of the town, taking advantage of the first significant pause in fighting, as word of the truce spread. Sunni Muslim fighters, who have been battling US Marines from street to street, remained inside.

Three Japanese civilians kidnapped in Iraq were safe near the town, 50 km west of Baghdad, Japanese TV said.

Government officials in Tokyo could not confirm the report.

Private TV broadcaster TBS quoted Japanese government and ruling party sources as saying the three captives were confirmed safe, but did not make clear if they had been freed.

Kidnappers released a video on Thursday threatening to kill them unless Japan withdrew its troops from Iraq by Sunday. The Japanese government rejected the demand.

In Fallujah, sporadic overnight clashes gave way to calm by dawn after intense efforts to arrange a ceasefire. International relief groups say 470 Iraqis have been killed and 1,200 wounded, including 243 women and 200 children, in a week of fighting.

"From the crack of dawn, Fallujah's imams and civic leaders will call on the fighters to hold their fire to avoid a massacre that could wipe out an entire city," said Qahtan al-Rubaie, a member of an Iraqi delegation that went to Fallujah on Saturday.

Rubaie returned to Baghdad on Saturday night to brief US officials on the ceasefire talks. He told Reuters the truce would begin at 10 a.m.

Guerrillas holding a US civilian—one of several foreigners kidnapped in Iraq this week—said they would execute him unless the siege of Fallujah was lifted.

"If not, he will be dealt with worse than those who were killed and burned in Fallujah," said a voice on a video tape broadcast on Al Jazeera, which showed the US hostage sitting in front of an Iraqi flag as his captors questioned him.

US Marines launched a crackdown in Fallujah last Monday after the killing of four US private security guards in the town the previous week. After they were killed in an ambush, the bodies of the guards were set ablaze and dragged through the streets by a crowd of cheering Iraqis.

Several foreigners have been killed, kidnapped or gone missing over the past week, putting pressure on US allies, including Japan, Britain, Spain and Italy. Apart from the three Japanese, those missing include two US soldiers, several contractors and two German Embassy security guards.

A correspondent for Britain's Daily Telegraph newspaper said guerrillas had shown him the bodies of the two Germans, said to have been killed in a highway shoot-out west of Baghdad.

The captors of the Japanese initially threatened to burn them alive unless Tokyo pulled its troops out. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi refused to do so, despite protests in Japan.

Al Jazeera said on Saturday it had received a fax from the kidnappers promising to release the hostages within 24 hours.

President George W. Bush said US-led forces would defeat the guerrillas wreaking havoc in Iraq and reaffirmed that an interim Iraqi government would take back sovereignty on June 30. *Reuters*

CANDLE FOR EASTER
A Romanian girl holds a candle as she sits on her father's shoulders during the midnight Easter service at the Patriarchal palace in Bucharest April 11. REUTERS

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Expert: Chen's bullet wound not self-inflicted

TAIPEI—A top US forensic expert brought in to lend credibility to a probe into the mysterious assassination attempt on Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian concluded on Sunday that Chen was definitely shot.

But after a whirlwind 48-hour investigation, Henry Lee left Taiwan with many questions unanswered about the mysterious attack on the eve of the presidential election that is now at the center of a huge political storm.

The most important of them is whether the shooting was staged—suspicions the opposition Nationalists have raised in a lawsuit to nullify Chen's election victory.

"President Chen Shui-bian was shot and it wasn't self-inflicted," Lee told reporters before leaving for Hawaii on Sunday after a two-day visit to the island.

When asked if the attack on Chen was staged, Lee said: "I have no idea."

Chen says he was gashed across the stomach and Vice President Annette Lu was wounded in the knee by two bullets fired from a homemade handgun as they campaigned in an open-top jeep in the southern city of Tainan on March 19.

The Nationalists says the shooting may have been faked or staged to win sympathy votes. Chen won the poll by a razor-thin margin the day after the attack.

Lee, who has worked on high-profile cases such as the O.J. Simpson murder trial, came to Taiwan after the opposition demanded impartial foreign experts to join the government probe.

The former Taipei police captain said DNA analysis showed one of the homemade bullets contained fiber fragments consistent with clothes worn by Chen on the day he was shot, but added further examination of the bullets was needed.

"Taiwan investigators need to identify the weapon and the origins of the ammunition used," said Lee, the head of a forensics institute in the US state of Connecticut.

He also pointed out the rounded heads of the bullets, which reduced their ability to penetrate, and to the amount and quality of gunpowder used as areas that needed further investigation.

"The amount of gunpowder can be adjusted to alter the bullet's destructive power," said Lee, who refused to draw any conclusions from his investigation.

Lee said his team had worked almost non-stop since arriving in Taiwan on Friday, adding that the investigation needed more time to examine the unique marks on the bullets that could lead to the machine that made them. *Reuters*

Rwanda, Holocaust survivors meet

PARIS—Scarred survivors of the Rwandan genocide met with a group of Jewish Holocaust survivors in Paris this week, to draw support from one another and discuss ways to prevent history from repeating itself.

Young Rwandan Tutsis who miraculously escaped the 1994 genocide fought back tears to tell of the 100 days of killing, as Jewish survivors of the Nazi death camps recounted how they had found the courage to live after the horror.

One of those present was Samuel Pisar, the youngest known survivor of the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz, who was imprisoned at the age of 12, his head shaved, and starved into submission.

Alongside him stood Reverien Rurangwa, a Rwandan Tutsi who was just 15 when Hutu killers left him for dead after slaughtering 43 members of his extended family.

"I will never be able to tell what I have seen," the young man told the group, tears streaming down his face, which still bears machete marks from the killing spree, in which his ribs were smashed and one of his hands hacked off.

Twenty-five-year-old Annick Kayitesi lost her entire family but one sister in the genocide. She struggled for a long time before finding the strength to talk of her suffering before the assembly. *AFP*

BALI DANCER

Chandra Susilo, 17, of Hawaii performs a "Taruna Jaya" dance from North Bali during the first annual Indonesian Cultural Day at the East-West Center of the University of Hawaii-Manoa in Honolulu, Hawaii, April 10. This dance depicts the mood of a man although it is performed by a woman. REUTERS

Subway set to unlock Bangkok jams

BANGKOK—Thailand's teeming capital may be about to jettison its reputation as one of the most gridlocked cities on earth, as its long-awaited subway system begins trials this week.

Millions of frustrated commuters who endure nightmarish daily journeys through the traffic jams are eagerly awaiting the advent of Bangkok's "Metro" which will free them from the city's fleet of elderly, fume-belching buses.

"It's not just the time wasted that will end but also the bad mood people take to the office and then back to their families," said 23-year-old store manager Tuenjai Wichianri who is on the road for three gruelling hours a day.

"Once we spent 45 minutes at one intersection and it is hard to breathe with all the tuk tuk (three-wheeled taxi) fumes filling the bus," he said.

The inaugural subway line, a $2.5-billion system with 18 stations stretching 20 km from the northern suburbs to the edge of bustling Chinatown, goes on public trial for six days from Tuesday.

Hundreds of thousands of joyriders will be able to get a taste of the gleaming new system, which is due to open for business in June after nearly a year of delays.

When all the lines are completed—expected to be by the end of the decade—the combined subway and above ground system will stretch for 111 km at a total cost of about $7.5 billion. *AFP*

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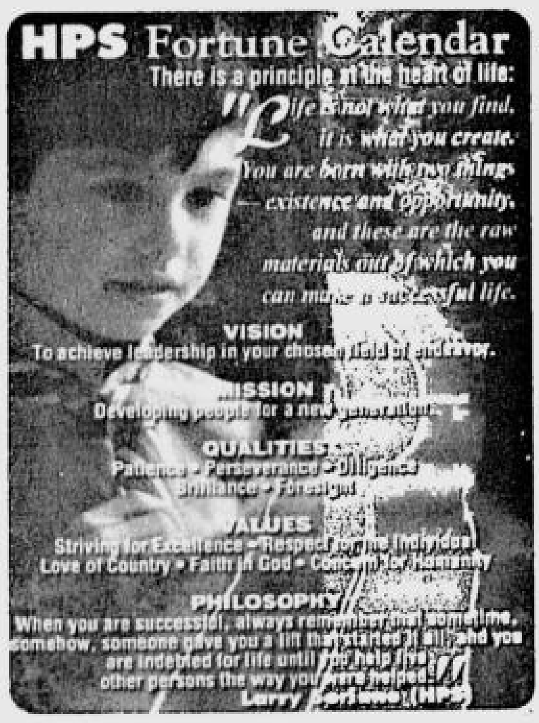

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Kapag ikaw ay matagumpay na, laging tandaan na minsan, mayroong taong tumulong sa iyo na nagsimula ng lahat ng ito, at ikaw ay buong buhay na may pananagutan hangga't hindi ka tumutulong sa lima pang tao tulad ng pagtulong sa iyo.

Ang boto natin ngayong Mayo 2004, ay boto para sa kinabukasan ng kabataang Pilipino.
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— Larry Soriano (HPS)

"The secret of life is not just to live, but to have something to live for."
Ngayon na ang pagkakataon ng kabataang Pilipino na masiguro ang kanilang magandang kinabukasan. Isulat dito ang pangalan ng kandidato na sa puso mo ay taglay ang mga katangiang nasasaad, gupitin, kopyahin(i-xerox), at ipadala ito sa mga mahal ninyo sa buhay, kapamilya, at mga matalik na kaibigan. Ito ay epektibong pamamaraan upang maliwanagan natin ang marami sa tunay na kahalagahan ng tamang pagpili ng mamumuno sa Pilipinas sa susunod na anim na taon.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, April 12, 2004
Octave of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 2:14, 22-32
Gospel: Mt 28:8-15

The women left the tomb at once in holy fear, yet with great joy, and they ran to tell the news to the disciples.

Suddenly, Jesus met them on the way and said, "Peace." The women approached him, embraced his feet and worshiped him. But Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to set out for Galilee; there they will see me."

While the women were on their way, the guards returned to the city and some of them reported to the chief priests all that had happened. The chief priests met with the Jewish authorities and decided to give the soldiers a good sum of money, with this instruction, "Say that his disciples came by night while you were asleep, and stole the body of Jesus. If Pilate comes to know of this, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." The soldiers accepted the money and did as they were told. This story has circulated among the Jews until this day.

Commentary

In a culture that did not accept as valid the testimony of women, it is remarkable that the four gospels did not hesitate to make Mary Magdalene's the first testimony of the resurrection of Jesus. It has much to say about the role of women as preachers today.

The chief priests and the Jewish authorities also had a "first": they were the first to give an explanation of the empty tomb. They would be followed by a cloud of theologians throughout the centuries who have tried to explain everything in the Faith. To explain is to explain away, because our explanations never do justice to reality. To "explain" means "to flatten out," and a mystery flattened out is only a theory at best. Perhaps it will be especially through the preaching of women that the mysteries will become mysteries again.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (ELECTORAL LAW)—Powers of the Commission on Elections—The Constitution has vested to the Comelec broad powers, involving not only the enforcement and administration of all laws and regulations relative to the conduct of elections, but also the resolution and determination of election controversies. It also granted the Comelec the power and authority to promulgate its rules of procedure, with the primary objective of ensuring the expeditious disposition of election cases. Concomitant to such powers is the authority of the Comelec to determine the true nature of the cases filed before it. Thus, it examines the allegations of every pleading filed, obviously aware that in determining the nature of the complaint or petition, its averments, rather than its title/caption, are the proper gauges. This was what the Comelec did when it treated respondent's questioned petition in EPC No. 2001-06 (captioned as an election protest) as a case for correction of manifest errors. The Comelec found that the averments therein actually call for the rectification of apparent errors in the Statement of Votes in Precinct No. 29-A-1 of Castillejos, Zambales. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Sandoval-Gutierrez, Dela Llana vs Commission on Elections, G.R. No. 152080. November 28, 2003]

BY R. B. VERA

Virgin Mary statue begins weeping again

PERTH, Australia—A statue of the Virgin Mary that has been drawing crowds since 2002 when it apparently began weeping rose-scented tears has started crying again, in the week before Easter, its owner said Sunday.

Patty Powell, who bought the statue 10 years ago in Bangkok, said it started shedding tears again on Palm Sunday.

"I had no idea it was going to happen, but like all of this, I take whatever I am given," Powell said. "I just accept it for what it is, but yes, I am surprised."

Powell, from the Western Australia state capital, Perth, began displaying the statue at a local Catholic church in 2002.

However the city's Catholic Archbishop Barry Hickey ordered her to remove it from the church after an analysis of the "tears" found they were a mixture of vegetable oil and rose oil.

"It is therefore my rightful duty as Archbishop of Perth, for the correct guidance of the people of God, to say that the case for a miraculous happening has not been proved," he said.

That ruling did not stop thousands of people flocking to see the statue, which is now on display four days a week at Powell's home, renamed the Holy Family House of Prayer, where she has built a shrine for the weeping figurine. *AP*

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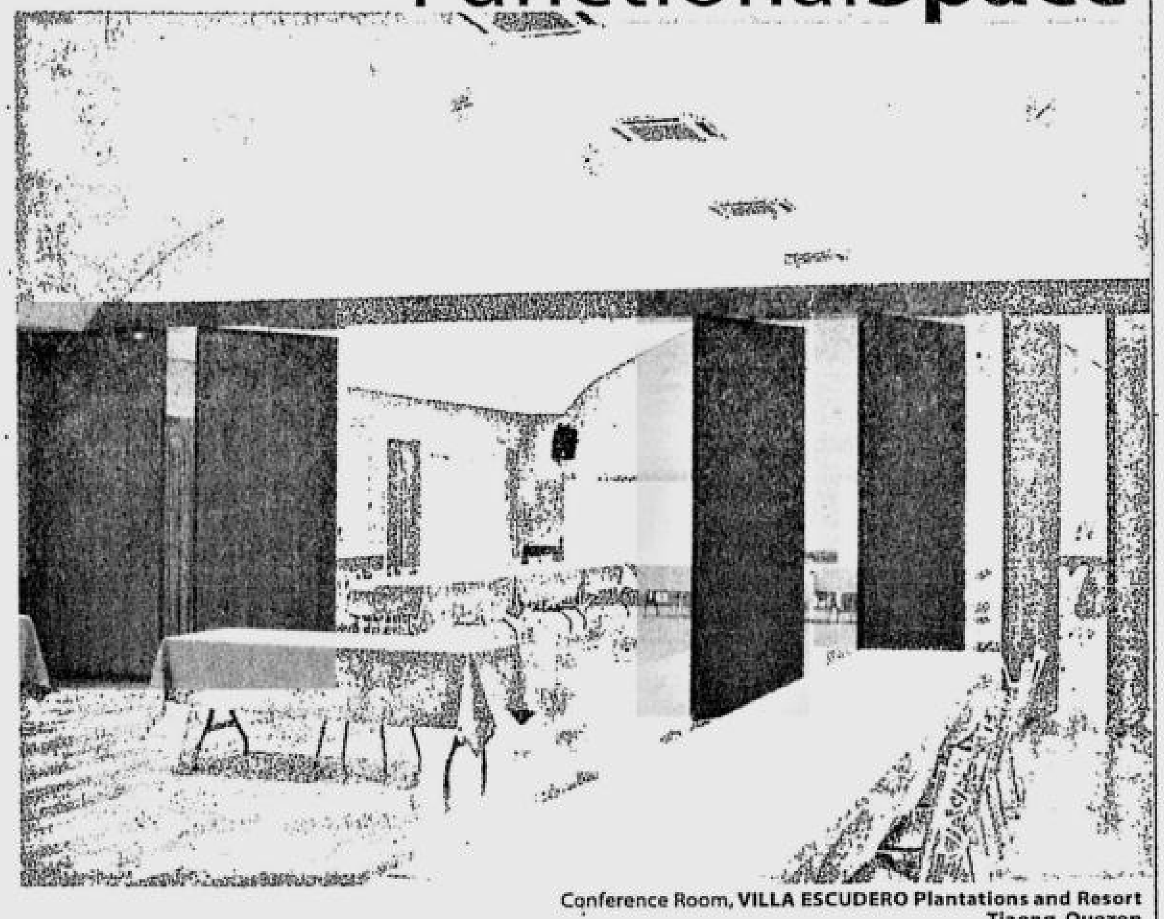

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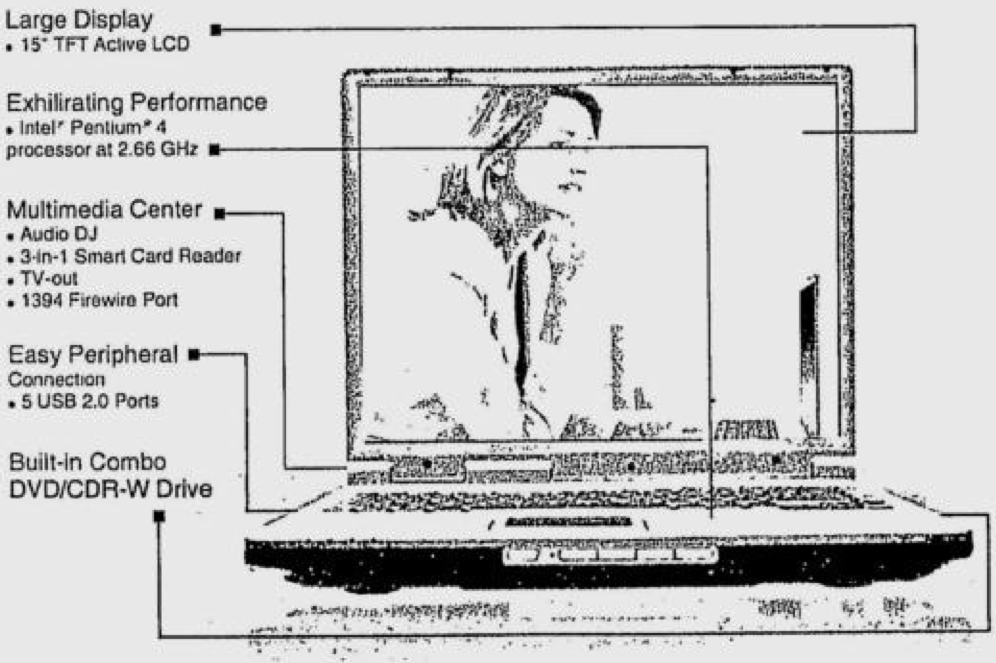

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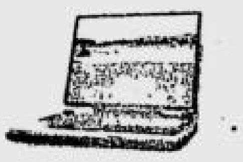

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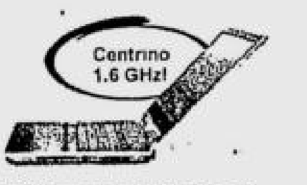

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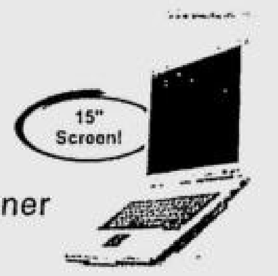

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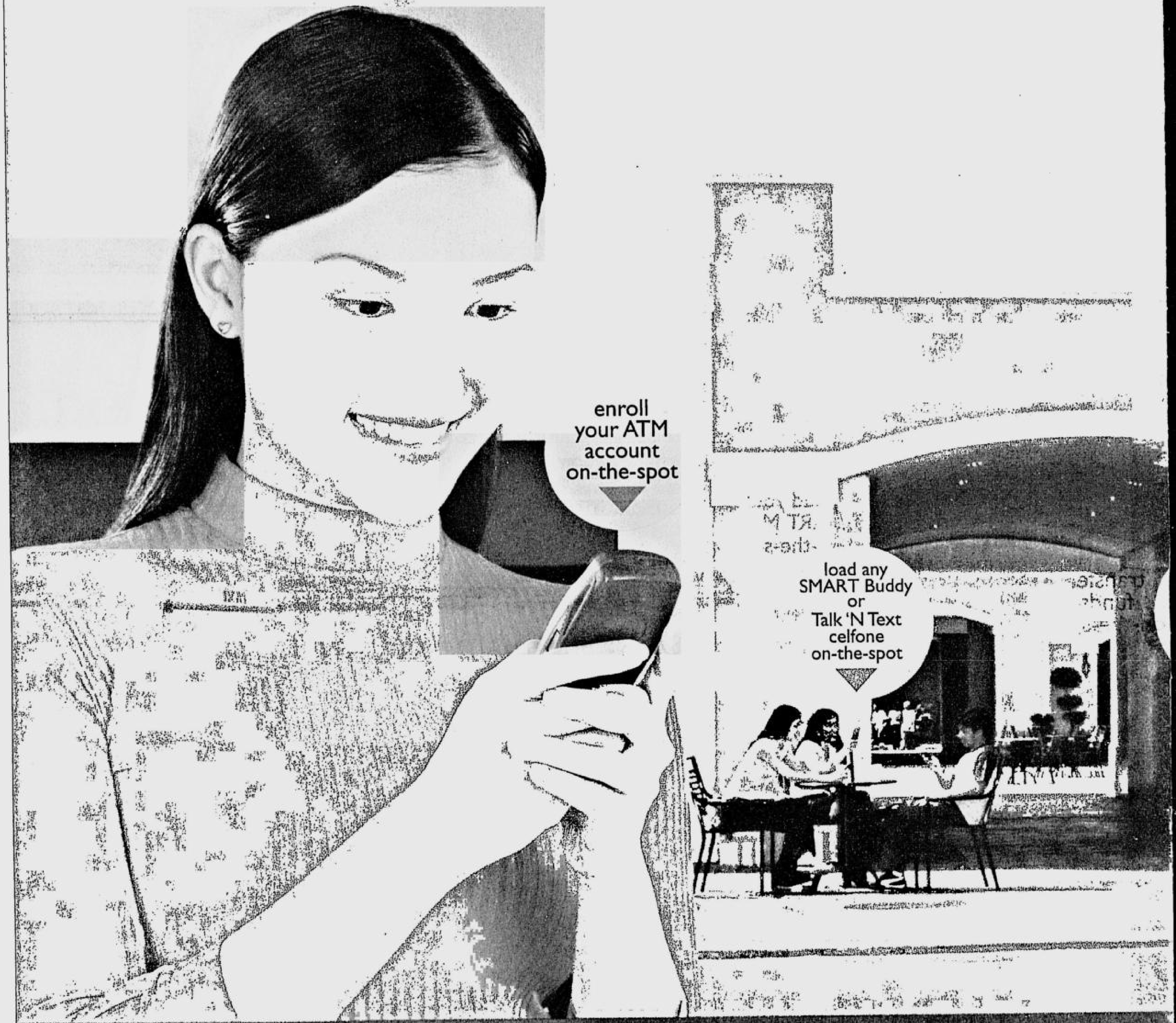

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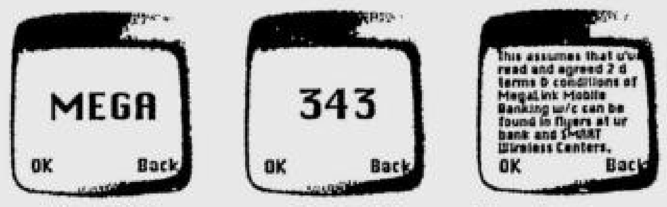

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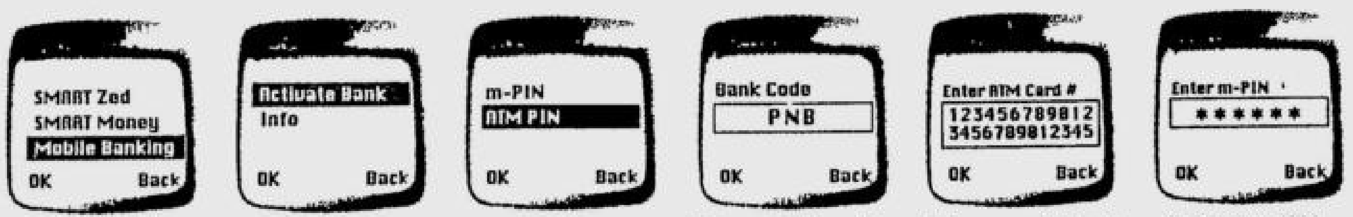

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Enter m-PIN
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Abu Sayyaf again

EDITORIAL

THIS is not the resurrection we had in mind. On the holiest days of the Christian calendar, the Abu Sayyaf group reared its bandit's head again. In a fierce firefight on Maundy Thursday, a top Abu Sayyaf leader, Hamsiraji Sali, was killed—a reminder that the pursuit of the brutal kidnap gang remains unfinished business. And then on Black Saturday, a total of 24 Abu Sayyaf members escaped from their Basilan jail, together with 29 other prisoners. The breakout was the third high-profile escape by terrorists from a police prison—a reminder that the government's counter-terrorism policy remains bedeviled by incompetence.

First question: Why were the Abu Sayyaf prisoners allowed to stay in Basilan in the first place? The clearest lesson from the pursuit operations of the bandit group has been that, like guerrillas, the Abu Sayyaf depended to a large extent on the willing or unwitting cooperation of some of the people. They were fish swimming in the ocean of popular support. Many ex-hostages and witnesses have testified that, in both their Basilan and Sulu areas of operation, the Abu Sayyaf hostage-takers were sometimes bandits on the run and sometimes ordinary people passing the time in street corners or at the town plaza.

Despite the advances made in what the government calls civil-military operations, it seemed only prudent to expect that, with local Abu Sayyaf detainees in prison, a local attempt would be made to free them. If state prosecutors had petitioned the courts to move the Abu Sayyaf prisoners to a detention facility outside Basilan, or the courts had allowed a change of venue of the trial (as has been done with other Abu Sayyaf defendants), they would have been completely in the right. It is unclear as yet where the responsibility lies, but part of the reason the Abu Sayyaf prisoners were able to escape the other day must be laid at the door of either the Department of Justice or the judiciary.

Second question: Why did some of the most dangerous detainees in the country enjoy minimal security? The two versions of the escape—curiously enough, both emanate from the office of the Basilan governor—differ in many details, but agree on this: one weapon, one prisoner, was enough to start the spectacular breakout.

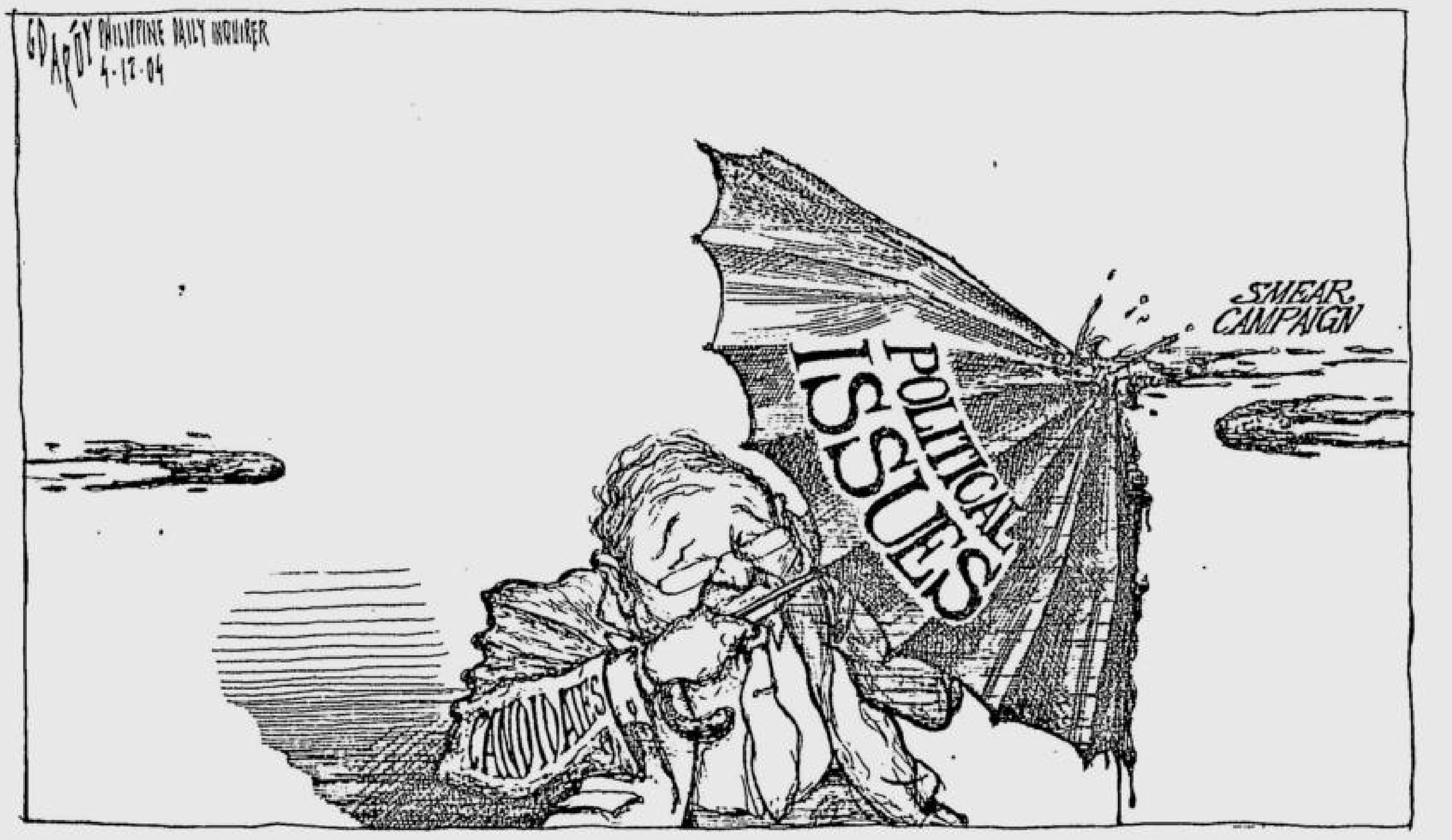
In the version of Christopher Puno, spokesperson for Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar, the wife of one of the prisoners managed to smuggle a pistol, which was then used to overpower the guards. In Akbar's own version, an Abu Sayyaf leader, Mubin Ibba, also known as Abu Black, grabbed a guard's gun at lunchtime.

The lax security is eloquent proof that the Philippine National Police has not learned from its mistakes, when sheer incompetence allowed Pentagon kidnap gang leader Faisal Marohombsar to escape from Camp Crame in 2002 and Jemaah Islamiyah bomb maker Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi to slip, again from Camp Crame, the following year. In particular, the Al-Ghozi escape was an international embarrassment, coming as it did on the day Australian Prime Minister John Howard arrived and before US President George W. Bush's state visit.

The escape of 24 Abu Sayyaf prisoners—eight inmates were killed by the pursuing authorities and nine were recaptured later in the day, but it is not yet known whether these included any of the 24—also could not have come at a worse time for the administration.

The New York Times has reported that, some three weeks ago, a high-ranking American official conveyed to the Macapagal administration unhappy news: the US government was seriously dissatisfied with the lack of progress the Philippine government was making in containing and eliminating terrorist threats. For an administration that prides itself on its front-line role in the US-led war on terror, the news came as a blow, and explains the flurry of counter-terrorism measures in the last two weeks.

The prison break has wiped out all the gains the administration earned from the killing of Sali, refocused attention on the PNP leadership, and threatens to drag Basilan back to square one. Most of the people in the island remain opposed to the Abu Sayyaf; they were, and are once again, victims of terror.



All you want to know about Maynilad-MWSS deal

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IN THE HEAT of summer, one's thoughts naturally turn to (what else?) water.

And when one thinks of water, one cannot avoid thinking of Maynilad and its controversial "bailout" from its financial problems by the Macapagal administration.

Was it really a "bailout"? Was it a "sweetheart deal"? Was it a "midnight deal"?

Did the Lopezes "mismanage" their water concession? Will the customers be saddled with the financial losses?

During the long lazy days of Holy Week, I had the leisure to read up on the controversy. I pored over the available documents, handouts, news clippings, etc. and as far as I can make out from the welter of confusing documents, everything is not as it seems on the surface.

What does it look like on the surface? Well, Benpres Holdings, the holding company of the Lopez family which controls Maynilad, was not able to pay P8 billion in concession fees to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and wants out from its concession contract to supply water to half of Metro Manila. Under the contract, Benpres will forfeit its $120-million performance bond in favor of the MWSS. That's a lot of money and the Lopezes need all the help that they can get.

The Macapagal administration is in a position to help them in exchange for the help they, through ABS-CBN, can give to the President's reelection bid. For one, ABS-CBN already allowed its popular talent, Noli de Castro, to run as GMA's running mate to boost her depressed ratings. But GMA needs more help in the form of favorable publicity to be able to overtake by election time Fernando Poe Jr. who is slightly ahead of her in the surveys.

So as a return favor to the Lopezes, a compromise was hammered out to "bail out" the family from its financial problem. Under this "sweetheart deal," Benpres will give up its concession but will not pay in full its P8 billion arrears in concession fees, and forfeit only $50 million of its $120 million performance bond. The compromise was done "in a hurry" as the election is coming up and also to preempt the Supreme Court from deciding the case already brought before it.

Because of the election fever, this perception is damning—and believable. But is that really the truth? I may be wrong but as far as I can make out, that is not the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Here's what I found out:

1. The problem started with the original concession contracts. They were the original sin. So that the privatization of the concession will not result in a monopoly, the government insisted on having two concessionaires and dividing the MWSS concession area between the two of them. Maynilad got the West Zone and Manila Water of the Ayala group got the East Zone. The MWSS' foreign debt was divided between them. Maynilad assumed 90 percent of the debt, or $800 million, while Manila Water assumed only 10 percent, or $80 million, because that was how the debt was spent between the West Zone and the East Zone. That is why the water rate of Maynilad is higher than that of Manila Water. The year was 1997.

2. Just three years later, disaster struck. The Asian financial crisis dropped the exchange rate of the peso from P26.30 to $1 in 1997 to P55 to $1 in 2000. Maynilad's foreign debt doubled from P20 billion to P40 billion. Maynilad could not afford the payments and did stop paying in March 2001.

3. To help the two concessionaires recover their foreign exchange losses, the MWSS allowed them rate increases although the original contract specified no increase for the first five years. But while Manila Water's current rates are at least six times higher than its original bid, Maynilad's rates are only four times. The customers didn't notice this irregularity because Maynilad's rate is much higher than Manila Water's to begin with.

4. Maynilad made a terrible mistake when it did not make a "due diligence" study of its concession zone. According to its handout, the original bid documents in 1996 identified only 2,500 kilometers of pipelines in the West Zone. It turned out, however, that there were actually 3,700 kilometers of pipelines, or 50 percent more, most of them very old and leaking. That is why Maynilad's "non-revenue water" (NRW—water that is supplied but is not billed because it is either lost through leaks or stolen through illegal connections) is a whopping 70 percent. In other words, more than two-thirds of the water that Maynilad supplies is lost. Although this is no actual loss to Maynilad because the raw water supplied by MWSS to Maynilad is free, this means that less than one-third of the water it supplies to its concession area is not billed and collected.

5. In 2000, during the term of President Estrada, Maynilad sought relief from the disastrous effects of the drastic drop in the exchange rate. The negotiations continued under President Macapagal-Arroyo. In October 2001, Amendment No. 1 granted Maynilad a three-step increase to allow it to recover its foreign exchange losses. Only two of the three rate increases, however, were implemented, the third having been deferred by the government in July 2002.

6. Since then, Maynilad and the MWSS have been engaged in negotiations and legal wrangling as the two sought to resolve their contrasting positions over the delayed rate increase, the non-payment of concession fee and the attempts of the MWSS to draw on the $120-million performance bond.

The present compromise proposal, therefore, cannot be called a "midnight deal that was quickly and secretly hammered out as negotiations have been going on since 2000.

(To be continued)

'Structural flaw'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IN BAGHDAD, a theater director assembles his cast for a play. He hasn't been paid for months. That is the least of his worries. The most is that he doesn't know how long he will be able to continue staging plays. Freedom of expression, along with things such as peace, is a most fragile thing in his country and could break anytime. He has mounted everything from Shakespeare to modern theater, but his latest offerings have been plays written by local playwrights, plays that reflect recent events.

One of them shows a woman sitting on a chair, doing a monologue. She is a mother who has lost her family in the war. Her audience, a gaggle of Iraqi artists, watches intently. Some of them are motionless, others fidget nervously. All of them are tearful. This is a realist theater in ways that add whole new dimensions to realism.

In Japan (where I was last week for a journalists conference on EU-Japan-Asia affairs), several men and women appear on TV. They are the parents and siblings of the three Japanese hostages taken by a terrorist group in Iraq. It's the first time this has happened to Japanese nationals abroad and it's turned into a crisis the likes of which the Japanese government has not seen since the War. It's all Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi can do to keep on even keel while he does his balancing act. He has refused to bow down to the terrorist demands to pull out Japanese troops from Iraq, saying those troops are non-combatant; but which many Japanese feel is really bowing down to American demands to keep those troops there, a decision that has been hugely unpopular to begin with.

But all that is of no concern to the kin of the hostages. All they can see are the puzzled faces of their sons and daughter or brothers and sister looking on in blurred outlines at the world while dark figures with long rifles stand behind them. That picture, procured by Al Jazeera, is flashed on TV nearly every hour and discussed in various programs. BBC and CNN merely report that the kin of the hostages have been pleading with their government to pull back their troops if that is what it will take to save them. On Japanese TV, you see them doing so.

Some of them are on the verge of tears, most have voices that quiver. All of them speak with extraordinary restraint and politeness, talking slowly and begging their government think of the hostages first before anything else. The restraint and politeness magnify their appeal. While they speak, the pictures of their loved ones—their faces no longer gaunt and haggard but clean-cut and in the flush of youth, smiling at the world through eyes that glimpse its vast expanse and the wonders that it holds—flash on TV. These are the couple of young men and (very) young woman who their captors say will be burned to death if their government does not leave Iraq well enough alone.

Just the day before, I watched Condoleeza Rice give her testimony before the committee investigating 9/11, speaking with authority and confidence about the events that led up to it. She began on a warm tone, expressing her shock and anger at what happened in New York on September 11, 2001 and her personal sympathy for the kin of the victims, some of whom were in the gallery observing the proceedings. From there, however, she took on a more bureaucratic rhetoric, peppering her account with buzzwords about security, terrorism and what it took to defend the homeland. Asked why the Bush government failed to act in a more strenuous way on an Aug. 6 intelligence report warning of dire events to come within the immediate future, she replied that she was hampered by a "structural flaw" in US intelligence gathering, specifically the time-honored division of labor between the FBI and CIA, or the separation of turf between domestic and foreign intelligence.

Later, one of the relatives of the victims, an elderly man, would express the sentiments of the others when he said that he found the excuse unacceptable. Clearly, he said, someone had messed up big, and he couldn't understand why no one would take responsibility for it, or show contrition for it. But to try to explain the whole thing away as a "structural flaw!"—he choked at his words and apologized for being very emotional.

But there is a "structural flaw" in all this.

It has nothing to do with the "structural flaw" Rice has in mind—or Dr. Rice, as she was constantly referred to. It has to do with people having eyes but not the ability to see. It has to do first of all with the people who decide war and peace seeing only the variables in their antiseptic equations and, helped along by the formidable insulation of bureaucratese, not the flesh and blood that take the full brunt of the "structural flaws" of their calculations.

But even more than that, it is the inability of one set of victims to see how their grief and despair are the same grief and despair that cut deep into the hearts of others. It is the capacity of people to see again and again the matchstick figures leaping to their deaths from the World Trade Center but not a child's arm sticking out from rubble that was once a home razed to the ground by a smart bomb. It is the capacity of one people to keen like dogs over the loss of their own but to see the entombing of others as the acceptable results of operations gone haywire.

That is the biggest structural flaw there is. The forgetfulness that the tears in Baghdad and Tokyo, as in New York, are the same.

Somewhere in the world, a mother is weeping and asking heaven for an explanation. Loss is the same wherever you are, whatever you are. Pain is the same wherever you are, whatever you are.

Lessons

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

HAPPY Easter to all. Easter is a most beautiful time of renewal for Mother Nature, as it ushers in the season of spring in temperate countries; in fact, Easter Sunday comes after spring's first full moon.

More significantly, theologians tell us that Easter is the most important feast of the Catholic Church, for it represents the triumph of Jesus Christ over death. If Christ did not rise from the dead, then his godhead would not have been established and our faith would have had no basis.

* * *

Since Easter is a triumph over the sufferings of Christ, this season of grace is the best time to recall the merits of suffering, with many of us still reflecting on the super-realistic movie by Mel Gibson on Christ's passion and death currently being shown in the country. Those of us who serve pro bono on the board of the Erda Foundation and the Erda Technical-Vocational High School, a school that trains students from very poor families on skills they can use right after high school, had a lesson on suffering, courtesy of Erda founder Pierre Tritz, S.J. In a recent annual meeting of the Erda Tech board, he showed up for the first time since his arrival in Manila last February. Fr. Tritz was on his annual fund-raising mission to Europe for Erda last year when he was forced to have an extended stay in France to convalesce after a bad fall in the home of an Erda donor last Oct. 13; it had resulted in a head blood clot that necessitated some delicate surgery.

* * *

Fr. Tritz, who turns 90 this September, told us that one of the lessons he learned during his long convalescence was on suffering, as inspired by the eminent French writer Andre Gide. Gide held the belief that "sicknesses are keys that can open to us certain doors" and that there are "certain doors that sickness alone can open." In fact, Gide reasoned that those who have never been sick may be unable to feel "real sympathy" for the quantities of miseries and sufferings in others. Prior to his accident Fr. Tritz had never been sick in his life, even in his ripe old age. In his first months of convalescence, he confessed, he "couldn't think properly, and suffered physically and psychologically," but after a while he began to understand the lessons of his sufferings. He spent the time writing more than 100 letters to those with difficulties and suffering, as well as to prospective donors of Erda. He said with a big smile that "Jesuits do not think of retirement," noting that the oldest Jesuit in the Philippines, Fr. Juan M.H. Ledesma, is 97 years old and "still working"; Fr. Tritz is the "fifth youngest" after Fr. Ledesma. The months of convalescence, however, indicated to him that "now I have to slow down" even though, he hopes one day "to become the oldest Jesuit around."

* * *

Fr. Tritz's sacrifices have long borne fruit. A few weeks back, radio thespian Nelly Natividad-Valdez, pinch-hitting for Cecile Alvarez, and I featured in our Sunday dzRH program on poverty alleviation Erda Tech administrator Wilhelmina Martinez and two former Erda scholars now in good jobs: Jeffrey Alvarado, 20, who works as materials clerk in a big construction firm called Flexitech Builders in Quezon City; and Rafael Alquiros, 23, who, after graduating from high school, has worked in the Nissan factory in Balintawak, where he was named outstanding technician for 2000.

Also with us was Polytechnic University of the Philippines professor Teofilo Mejia Jr., who's currently working for his doctorate in administration and management. Mejia can be considered one of Fr. Tritz's original scholars. The good father bailed him out of the city jail, where he was detained for some family problem. "I took a look at that boy and I cannot forget the look on his face," recalls Fr. Tritz. Mejia told him he wanted to study and Fr. Tritz, then chaplain at Araneta University, sent him to high school and college there.

* * *

In this season of grace we recall and pray for friends and kin who are suffering greatly, such as former Sime Darby executive Carmelo "Lito" Caluag who is very ill with cancer, and those who have succumbed to cancer recently, such as my cousin, Renato Pasimio Jr. It's timely to point out that independent senatorial candidate Heherson Alvarez pledges to pursue, if elected to the Senate, a program for cancer patients called the "Philippine Cancer Act," similar to what they have in the US. Alvarez realized the need for this legislation, especially for indigent and needy patients, while in the US recently with his theater/media personality wife, Cecile, for treatment at New York's Sloan Kettering Memorial Cancer Institute. There he saw the need for a holistic, scientifically coordinated and humanitarian approach to the treatment of this killer disease where the poor may enjoy a "treatment now, pay later" plan.

* * *

Calling for a massive information campaign against cancers prevalent among both the male and female population, Alvarez noted that health department statistics indicate that cancer incidence has been rapidly increasing, from about 31 cases for every 100,000 Filipinos in 1974 to 72 cases per 100,000 in 1994, or an average of 53 new cases each year. However, he noted that there are only 14 hospitals for cancer treatment in this country, eight of them in Metro Manila; the government runs four of these hospitals, but they are seriously under-equipped; in fact, in one government hospital 120 patients are treated daily, using only one Cobalt machine.

***Omnia in bonum*. The sickness of Cecile enabled Alvarez to discover another natural constituency aside from the environmentalists—the numerous cancer-afflicted families.**

Madrid is crying, Manila is praying

COMMENTARY

Mia Corazon A. Aureus
Institute on Church and Social Issues

MANILA—Señor Javier Galvan, director of the Instituto Cervantes, was saying goodbye to Georgina Padilla, promoter of the Zobel award for Filipino writers in Spanish, after a talk in his office about a book project, when he saw Señora Ana Reguillo, academic head of the institute, pass by crying.

"Why? What happened to you? Do you have flu or something?" he asked her.

Reguillo, then, broke the sad news to him.

Early that morning of March 11 (in Spain), bombs exploded in Madrid, killing over 200 commuters and injuring about 1,500 people.

That report sent Galvan rushing to the library on the third floor of the building to watch the news. There he caught images of Madrid—its normal rush hour scene paralyzed as survivors sat and lay in the midst of wreckage, terribly shaken, in tears.

"I was shocked and paralyzed for a second," he admitted. "Then I thought immediately, no my family does not take the train at 7 a.m. Nobody in my family [does], in that part of the city."

Galvan has been in Manila since 2001 serving as director of Instituto Cervantes, a Spanish institution established to teach and promote the Spanish language as well as disseminate Spanish and Hispanic culture around the world.

Nobody expected Madrid to become a target of radical Islamic terrorism despite its membership in the US coalition of the willing.

"We have been very surprised about that. ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna) was expected. There were members of ETA with a lot of bombs who were stopped before getting into Madrid," Galvan said referring to a thwarted attempt last month of the group to transport large quantities of explosives into the capital city.

Outgoing Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar and his Popular Party also immediately put the blame on ETA which has been terrorizing the state for almost four decades now. Interior Minister Angel Acebes was quoted by Time magazine saying there was "no cause for doubt" that ETA was behind it since the group vowed to disrupt the elections. The bombing happened three days prior to the Sunday polls.

However, Galvan found it a bit strange that the victims were working class people. Indeed, the Spanish police also found the incident lacking in ETA trademarks such as: "the absence of a warning, which ETA usually gives; the deliberate targeting of civilians; and the sheer scale of the operation."

ETA was on the "hotseat" until one bomb which did not explode gave away vital clues leading to the real masterminds—Islamic terrorists with links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida.

For making the country a target of terrorism and trying to cover it up by blaming the ETA, Aznar and his ruling Popular Party was voted out of office by angry anti-Iraq war voters.

The threat of retaliatory action, such as witnessed in Spain, also affected other coalition members, particularly, the United Kingdom, Australia, Poland and the Philippines.

Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski told some visiting French journalists, "That they (the United States) deceived us about the weapons of mass destruction... We were taken for a ride." Agence France Presse noted that it was the "first sign of official criticism by a US ally of the invasion of Iraq."

In the Philippines, efforts continue to persuade President Macapagal-Arroyo to follow the move of Spanish Prime Minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero who decided to withdraw Spain's 1,300 troops by June 30 unless the United Nations takes action.

Above all, political analyst Amando Doronila pointed out that the Spanish election is "seen as a clear example of terrorism directly affecting a national election in Europe." He further said, "the al-Qaida has shown that it has shifted its strategy by using terrorism as a tool to change government and policy that had been hostile to it."

Sensing the international community's initial reaction of fear and seeming tendency to buckle in the face of terrorism, Galvan thought the world was sending a wrong message, bolstering the terrorists' illusions of power over the world.

"Imagine now if the Philippines, the British and the Polish withdrew. That would show that terrorists can affect the democratic countries with attacks. [For terrorists] that would mean, 'OK, if I put a bomb and I kill 200 people, I can change the decision of a government.' That would be terrible," Galvan said.

Galvan, then, urged the members of the United Nations to mend their rifts, step up and take a more dominant role as a collective international governing body.

Galvan stressed that instead of having a sort of world policeman like the United States, the UN's role should be really pre-dominant. "These conflicts should be solved. The UN should be the one to take care of that instead of [just] one country, with the wider agreement of the international community."

While Madrid was crying and many other cities in Europe, South America and the United States were protesting in the streets, the Filipino-Spanish community in Manila was praying.

On March 21, the Spanish Embassy organized a solemn Mass at the San Agustin Church, not only for the people who died but for all of Spain. That Sunday morning, the priest voiced the emotions in the hearts of people: "Our hearts are not measured by the distance but by solidarity. We are with you. We remember you in our prayers."

Generations get tested

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

A READER of my blog (www.quezon.ph), Martin Bautista, asked the following question during Holy Week: "Just wondering what would have happened if your grandfather and other politicians of the time had not collaborated with the colonialists from the US. More than 60 years later, I find it hard to see where all that collaboration brought us into." Another blogger, Prem Vilas Fortran M. Rara, added a challenge: "I am excited to hear an answer from one of your entries (preferably in PDI)."

The answer to Bautista's question must begin with Apolinario Mabini. Mabini, writing at the end of his life, suggested "the mutual reconciliation of Americans and Filipinos." Mabini had started as believer in Rizal's evolutionary—not revolutionary—views, then shifted to supporting the revolution and infant republic under Aguinaldo, and remained hostile to the Americans even after the republic's defeat. Writing after his return from exile in Guam, Mabini penned the following reflection:

"I shall end with a question. Would the grant of the reforms formerly sought from the Spanish Government satisfy the Filipinos now? I am very much afraid not, because the aspiration for independence, almost unknown before, now beats strongly at the bottom of all hearts. Its denial and the threats and violent acts of the Government, only serve to affirm this feeling and to keep it alive; we did not fight and suffer for it for nothing. The denial of independence will doubtless content those who accommodate themselves to any situation in order to enjoy its advantages, but they are very few, and they are despised if not hated by the masses, because they claim the masses are not yet fit for independence when it is they who are giving evidence of unfitness by making it plain they have no political ideal other than their personal convenience. Before my deportation to Guam, those who had unconditionally taken the [US] Government's side in order to win the official title of friends of peace tried to organize a political party [the Federalistas]. Since the Government could not promise more than a future autonomy, which did not and does not satisfy the people, it did not suit them to adopt this objective since very few would join them. They therefore asked for annexation as a territory for the time being, and subsequently as a state... I had the imprudence to remark that their aspiration was chimerical; that if they wanted something positive, they should work on the Government to give in a little and promise independence in the future; and that I would help them to convince the people that it should also compromise and give up immediate independence. Although I was counseling accommodation to both sides so as to arrive at a compromise, the only foundation of a true peace, I was pronounced intransigent and as such was deported to Guam, where I was held prisoner incommunicado for more than two years. ...Nonetheless in the belief that it is my duty, I shall be imprudent once more and recommend for the second time the mutual reconciliation of Americans and Filipinos."

Mabini, in a nutshell, wrote the blueprint for the restoration of the independence through collaboration. In so doing, he also exacted his revenge on his enemies in the Malolos government, whom he felt had never been in favor of independence at all. Mabini also identified the legacy of the revolution and the Malolos republic, which was the inevitability of the desire for political independence: reform and autonomy, which would have satisfied many propagandists before the revolution, could no longer be enough.

This is why in 1907—by then Mabini was dead—a new generation of leaders had wrested political leadership from those whom Mabini hated: Pedro Paterno, for one, had to give up his aspirations for the speakership of the First Philippine Assembly to a young provincial leader named Sergio Osmeña. Mabini's criticisms of his generation of leaders thus explains why a new generation took its place: the old leaders were out of touch, and a younger generation was able to articulate the kind of leadership desired by the public—or at least the portion of the public that could vote.

From 1907 to 1935, Philippine leaders walked a fine line between the common desire for "absolute and immediate" Philippine independence, and an independence with something to back it up economically and militarily. Ahead of India, we achieved political independence peacefully: something other colonized nations envied at the time. The fruits of that independence, despite the bitter experience of World War II, were on the whole, remarkable: a republic second only to Japan in terms of economic development in this part of the world in the 1960s.

However, that republic (our third), failed two crucial tests: the first being in the 1940s, when the leaders of Osmeña's generation were found wanting by a younger generation (the generation that fought in the war), but still managed to hang on; and failed again in the 1960s, when the generation that fought in the war was, in turn, found wanting by the baby boomers who had embraced Marxism and similar radical ideas. This generation never had a chance to take over, or begin taking over, the way they did in say, France and America, which had their versions of the First Quarter Storm. They had to wait until the '80s, by which time they were tired, old and cynical, after the traumatic rule of Ferdinand Marcos, who instituted a home-grown version of the Japanese Occupation with equally dire results.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Thoughts of an OCW

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

INITIALLY, they were called overseas Filipino workers. Then, for some murky reasons, the government decided to describe them instead as overseas contract workers.

OFW or OCW, what's in a name? They both refer to Filipinos who, for lack of substantive employment opportunities in our country, were forced to work elsewhere in the world so they can provide for the financial needs of their families.

For the $10 billion, more or less, that they send home annually, the expatriate Filipinos are hailed by the government as "today's modern heroes." Without their remittances, the country would have been in a deeper economic rut.

Away from their loved ones, many of these OCWs keep abreast with the events in the Philippines through the websites that the broadsheets maintain in the Internet. In the INQUIRER's case, it's INQ7.net.

I find extra joy in getting e-mail from our *kababayans* in Hong Kong, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Oman and some countries in Europe, who take time from their heavy work schedule to write me their reaction to political and social issues in the country.

Their letters show genuine concern. They ooze with pride when they read about Filipinos who make the country proud in international competitions. They grieve over natural or man-made calamities that hit the nation. However, they bristle with anger when they hear about graft and corruption in government.

What's more, I seldom sense arrogance or the I-told-you-so attitude in the words of OCWs when they speak out on matters of national interest, so unlike some Filipino expats who think anything that does not fit Western standards is beyond them.

Positive news

I have so much respect for OCWs that I straighten up when they comment on the way the media cover the events in our country. Last week, an OCW, who identified himself as Ray Colorado, expressed his sentiments about journalists.

He wrote: "If our journalists write one positive article for every five negative ones they dish out, I have a feeling our nation will be highly energized and motivated. Perhaps, we should begin evaluating our journalists' qualification to shape our mind about our country.

"Negative comments are worthless, even destructive, when they simply repeat what has been said a hundred times by other journalists. Ideas for positive action or thinking, however, are productive the more often they are repeated.

"Unfortunately, many of our journalists are what I call 'fly by nights.' They do not really analyze things that are doable, they simply re-issue old garbage. And then they regard themselves as journalists by the sheer number of articles they have written, not by the number of useful ideas they have generated for building up the nation.

"But we have good journalists also. If we mute a little those who deliver nothing but froth-in-the-mouth blabber, maybe the actionable ideas of our worthy journalists will shine."

The thoughts of the reader reflect those of many other OCWs who write me from time to time when unpleasant news hit the front page of the INQUIRER. Beset by homesickness and anxiety about the families they've left behind, I cannot blame them if they get upset when they read about negative reports in the websites of local newspapers.

Efforts

I recall an OCW writing that sometimes he avoids surfing the Net because he winds up going to the INQUIRER website and reading about depressing stories. But he can't help it since he is always hungry for news about the country.

I can only say "amen" to the sentiments expressed by the reader. How nice would it be to wake up every morning and be greeted by news that things are going well for all of us? Who wouldn't want to hear or read about the "good and beautiful" in our midst?

This is not the first time that readers have asked that the INQUIRER come out with more positive news. Or stories that show the good side of the Filipinos or projects that contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the less privileged members of our society.

An effort in that direction is made in the newspaper's Sunday edition. On that "feel good" day, the pages of the INQUIRER are replete with stories about the triumph of the human spirit, acts of kindness by Filipinos to their compatriots and other accounts showing that, for all its faults, this country has its own share of blessings from Almighty God.

Every day, even if we cannot seem to have enough of bad news, there is always at least one positive story on the front page of the INQUIRER. That practice, so far, has been consistently observed either by way of independent news reports or as part of other important front-page news.

Obviously, some readers are not satisfied with the present crop of positive news. They want more and I am not surprised. Only the masochist or psychologically unbalanced enjoy accounts of crimes, corruption and the darker side of life. I'd like to believe that these kinds of people do not form the bulk of the INQUIRER's readers.

Balance

But the problem of acceding to the readers' request is the newspaper may fall short of its duty and responsibility of reporting the events as they happen. Sad, but true, the unpleasant news reports in our country that have national impact seem to be greater in number than news that can make the Filipinos happy and contented with their lives.

If news about the "good and beautiful" is emphasized at the expense of negative but important news, the newspaper risks being tagged as part of the government propaganda machine. And with that label, the newspaper's credibility will become a thing of the past.

Just where lies the balance between positive and negative news is a question that confronts daily the editorial staff that take seriously their mission to be fair and objective in their reporting of the news.

For all the criticisms about the content of newspapers, however, we can take consolation in the fact that our press is free, something that some people in our region can only dream of.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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Betrayal of Filipino WWII veterans

THE TREMBLING, emotion-laden voice of Norman Reyes, a Filipino soldier who served in Bataan until its surrender to the Japanese Imperial Army, boomed over the clandestine radio announcing the sad news. After months of resisting the enemy that cost thousands of American and Filipino lives, Bataan had finally fallen. The announcement was relayed over the "Voice of Freedom," a makeshift radio station inside the Malinta tunnel in Corregidor. It was April 9, 1942.

Accounts from survivors of that terrible episode in our history vividly described that sad day. They recalled that with tears rolling copiously down Reyes' face, he read the message to the Filipino people like a true soldier. The message was written by Salvador P. Lopez, another Bataan defender, who would later become president of the University of the Philippines and a luminary in Philippine government.

Reyes continued, "The world will long remember the epic struggle of the Filipino and American soldiers in the jungle fastness and rugged coasts of Bataan."

But it was not to be so. In 1946, right after the war, the US Congress passed the Rescission Act which declared that their comrades-in-arms, the Filipino veterans, did not render active service while fighting under the American flag and they, therefore, were not entitled to the promised compensation and benefits their American counterparts were entitled to. It will be recalled that the Philippines was then under the US commonwealth, and the Filipinos, for all intents and purposes, were American citizens.

The sad turn of events was specially tragic and excruciatingly painful for those who were widowed and orphaned by the brave men who gave their lives for the American war. For more than five decades now, the survivors of that war have fought to correct this injustice but to no avail.

For years, the Philippine government and private missions have paid homage to the gods in Washington, lobbying for a legislation favorable to Filipino veterans.

Meantime in the United States, bills that would improve the lot of the hapless veterans have been filed and refiled in Congress but these bills have been, like the Filipino World War II veterans, set aside and forgotten.

As we commemorate the fall of Bataan this month and remember the valiant men who were savaged by the cruelty of that war, and those who fought and perished so we can extend aid to a friend in need, let us also call to mind and remember that the only hand the Filipino can depend on—in war or in peace—is the one at the end of his arm.

According to Col. Emmanuel de Ocampo, president of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines, an average of 40 World War II "leftovers" die every month from old age, extreme poverty and lack of health care. For obvious reasons, the mortality rate accelerates every year. Soon, we no longer will have authentic war heroes.

—R. VALENZUELA CONSTANTINO,
57 C.V. Starr,
Philam Village,
Pamplona, Las Piñas City

America must redeem its promise

I AM a veteran of World War II, inducted into the United States Armed Forces in the Far East on Dec. 21, 1941 and honorably discharged on March 20, 1946. The United States recruited us with the promise that we would be in equal footing with the American GI in benefits and remunerations. The infamous Rescission Act of 1946 broke that solemn promise of President Roosevelt and Gen. Douglas MacArthur, after hundreds of Filipino soldiers endured indescribable sufferings and died for the American flag.

In a letter to widows of Filipino veterans, the US Department of Veterans Affairs informed that there is a US law declaring that "service with the Philippine Commonwealth Army, USAFFE, including recognized guerrillas, or service with the new Philippine Scouts... shall not be deemed to have been active military service with the Armed Forces of the United States for the purpose of establishing entitlement to nonservice-connected death pension." But, why are veterans with service-connected disease considered to have rendered service in the US Army and awarded benefits? Why this double-standard?

Another unjust treatment of the Filipino veterans by the USVA is the disenfranchising of hundreds of Filipino veterans from naturalization benefit because their service records cannot be found at the National Personnel Records Center at St. Louis, Missouri. Yet, it is a fact that US records on the services of hundreds of Filipino veterans were destroyed when fire broke out at the National Personnel Records Center in 1973. The USVA does not honor the military service records at Camp Aguinaldo. The veterans are requesting the USVA to honor those military service records.

US President George W. Bush, in his recent visit to the Philippines, announced that President Macapagal-Arroyo is his "most valued ally." Would that she request President Bush to reverse the decision of the USVA in favor of the veterans and redeem the US government's promise.

—SEGUNDINO
A. CAVAL,
Hindang,
Leyte 6523

Retired soldiers' contribution to society

IN YOUR March 5 editorial "Mud and the military," part of the penultimate paragraph said that there "... are retired generals and other officers who are cantankerous in their support of Poe, Lacson, Villanueva or Gil. These old foggies neither have the wisdom to drop dead nor the good grace to fade away...."

The statement seems to suggest that retired generals are bad tempered or too outspoken in their support of certain candidates. While that may be true with those who opt to exercise their individual rights and preferences as private citizens, it is unfair to indict in a sweeping manner the rest of the retired generals who constitute the majority. There are about 700 retired generals who are members of the Association of Generals and Flag Officers and hardly 6 percent of that number is engaged in partisan politics. In fact, most Agfo members have cautioned their "cantankerous" colleagues to refrain from using Agfo or similar sounding acronyms as a gimmick to enhance their propaganda efforts in support of their candidates. No one has been authorized by Agfo to involve the association in partisan politics.

We have always emphasized the fact that Agfo is a non-partisan and a fraternal organization. It is non-partisan because we have members who are in the active service who are prohibited to engage in any partisan political activity, except to vote. We therefore, have to insulate the AFP and PNP from partisan politics by taking a neutral and apolitical stance.

To declare "these old foggies," as not having "the wisdom to drop dead" is grossly uncharitable and unkind. It is vulgar language unworthy of the erudition that members of media are reputed to have.

These "old foggies" deserve some respect, if not gratitude, from the people they have served. Retired police and military officers have served long and well so that we can enjoy the blessings of democracy and freedom. Like any Filipino, these retirees have rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights of our Constitution. They can engage in any lawful activity, including partisan politics, and can even run for elective positions. So, "fading away" is beside the point considering that compulsory retirement is at age 56 and that the average age of Agfo members is at the mid-60s. Ergo, there are still so much more in various expertise that the retirees can contribute to the mainstream of our society.

To discriminate against retired generals is therefore uncalled for. Please be kind enough to treat retired generals with prudence and to extend to them the courtesies that they deserve. It is also suggested that write-ups on issues like these, especially in your editorials, should be couched with a little more finesse and "diplomatese."

—BRIG. GEN. JOSE C. BELLO JR., (ret.),
chair/president,
Association of Generals
and Flag Officers Inc., Agfo Center,
Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, QC

THE INQUIRER apologizes to the retired officers and men who served our country well in war and peace.

We salute all non-partisan members of the Armed Forces.—**Editor in chief**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

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Unesco: Revive rice terraces body

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) wants the Philippine government to reinstate an agency supervising the restoration of the country's only living rice terraces.

The Banaue Rice Terraces Task Force (BRTTF) that used to oversee the rehabilitation of the rice terraces in Ifugao was abolished in 2002 by President Macapagal-Arroyo to streamline her administration's bureaucracy.

Unesco noted the absence of the institution that would oversee the rehabilitation of the rice terraces in Ifugao and some parts of Mt. Province after a review in March.

A 1995 agreement between Unesco and the Philippine government contains this provision when the terraces was included in the list of centuries-old artifacts as World Heritage Sites, said Purificacion Molintas, Cordillera director of the Department of Tourism.

But Molintas clarified that Unesco required a general overseer, and had not obliged Malacañang to revive the BRTTF.

Until its termination, the task force acted as the body that monitored the progress of various government agencies tasked with reviving the terraces in Ifugao towns like Banaue and Hungduan.

Cordillera farmers invest P18.90 to produce a kilogram of rice that is worth only P7.51 a kg, a financial analysis of upland rice farming in 2000 shows.

The report, published by the Central Cordillera Agricultural Program (Cecap), said "the average net profit per hectare" of upland rice fields was only P835.

Many terraces have since been abandoned or have fallen to disrepair, prompting Unesco to place these on its endangered list.

Molintas said the abolition of the BRTTF and its predecessor, the Ifugao Rice Terraces Commission, allowed the Ifugao provincial government and six towns to handle the terraces' restoration.

Ifugao Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. had been pushing for a return of the region's indigenous rice cycle to restore the importance of terrace-grown rice to the community. He also formed a foundation that would oversee the terraces' development.

Molintas said Unesco is amenable to a government overseer that is run exclusively by local communities.

The common sentiment drawn by Unesco team members during their visit to the terraces last month, was that the terraces could only be rescued by the indigenous culture that built them, she said.

But the teams also noted that several Ifugao villages still preferred to have the national government finance the terraces' restoration.

The book, "Highland Rice Production in the Philippine Cordillera," shows that the terraces have started to decay due to the increased depletion of its watershed cover. This has resulted in the "destruction of the ground cover," a "low surface water availability," and massive erosions that are no longer regenerated.

The book said decreased resources span smaller rice yields, which affect a growing Ifugao population. Consequently, the supply problem and the absence of short-term economic alternatives forced many families to abandon the terraces.

Ifugao Rep. Solomon Chungalao had planned to file a bill that sought a new terraces commission before the BRTTF was abolished.

FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS
SOPOHIE HOFBAUER/CONTRIBUTOR
Young Negrenses dance for a better future during the closing ceremony of the Panaad sa Negros Festival in Bacolod City.

Pangasinan solon asks Comelec to put district under control

SAN CARLOS CITY—Pangasinan Rep. Generoso Tulagan has asked the Commission on Elections to put the province's third district under its control after his security aide was gunned down on Sunday morning.

Police said SPO4 Hidalgo Palisoc, 54, and who was assigned to Tulagan since 1998, came from the legislator's house and was on his way home when the gunmen attacked him near the city hall at about 5:30 a.m.

Palisoc succumbed to 13 bullet wounds, four of them in the head.

Tulagan said he would also ask Philippine National Police officials to change the police force in the city following the killing.

Tulagan, who is running for reelection, said before he left for several speaking engagements on Saturday night, Palisoc advised him to be careful because of information that the legislator might be attacked.

"I was supposed to attend four fiestas that night but I went home after attending only two. When I got home at around 2 a.m., Palisoc and I had coffee and he informed me that somebody asked him to leave me so he won't get caught in (a plot to harm me)," Tulagan said.

"*Payong-kapatid daw, umalis na lang siya para di madamay* (He was given a brotherly advice to leave my camp so he would not be involved). But he refused to leave me," he said.

Reports said that two weeks before Palisoc's slaying, motorcycle-riding men were seen casing Tulagan's house here.

Tulagan said the killing could have been politically motivated because the person who warned Palisoc about the threats is a friend who is now working for a local politician.

"I asked him (Palisoc) to go on a vacation if he wanted to, but he said since he was about to retire (from the police service), he would just stay with me if I would win my third term," Tulagan said.

"Before I went to sleep, he told me he was going home early because he would hear Mass. I asked him to patrol around the house first before going home. Before 6 a.m. (Sunday), I got a call from another aide telling me he has been killed," Tulagan said.

He said Palisoc's murder would not stop him from campaigning around his district.

Hot spot

In Zamboanga City, the Comelec in Western Mindanao has tightened its watch over a lesser known town in Zamboanga Sibugay after it was declared a hot spot.

Helen Aguila-Flores, Comelec regional director, said three other provinces, including Sulu, had been declared areas of concern.

Flores said the declaration of Buug town as a hot spot was firmed up because of intense political rivalry there that has resulted to at least one death and six injuries.

She said armed groups also roam around the town and loose firearms proliferate. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

6 NPA rebels, civilian killed in 2 Pampanga, Quezon clashes

SIX suspected New People's Army rebels were killed in two incidents yesterday and last Tuesday in Pampanga and Quezon provinces.

Three of the suspected NPA rebels were killed in an encounter with policemen in Sta. Ana, Pampanga, on Sunday afternoon, while three rebels and a civilian died after an encounter on April 6 with Army troops in Sitio Mabato, Barangay Ayusan in Tiaong, Quezon.

Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, Pampanga police director, said they have yet to identify the three slain rebels.

He said that at 2:40 p.m. on Sunday, or an hour after the clash broke out, members of the police's Special Reaction Unit and the Regional Mobile Group were still exchanging gunfire with an undetermined number of rebels holed up inside a house in Barangay San Agustin in Sta. Ana town.

Central Luzon police director Chief Supt. Vidal Querol said around 30 rebels belonging to the NPA's Pampanga command under a certain Amor Adona had clashed with policemen.

The NPA unit who took cover in the house was armed with an M-203 grenade launcher, Mendoza said.

Policemen recovered two M-16 rifles and an M-14 rifle from the clash site.

Intelligence reports gathered by barangay officials led policemen to the rebels, he said.

Quezon

The human rights group Karapatan in Southern Tagalog identified the slain rebels as Lope "Ka Ex" Macalalad, a native of Buenavista, Quezon; Joel Mendoza from Paluan, Occidental Mindoro; and Eduardo "Ka Kenneth" Garcia from Atimonan.

Another rebel identified as "Ka Apo" has been declared missing by the human rights group.

A village official identified the civilian casualty as Estelita Marasigan.

The victim's husband, Eulogio, and daughter, Elena, were both wounded during the firefight.

No casualty was reported on the government side.

Eulogio was confined at the military hospital inside the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command headquarters in Camp Nakar here.

Quezon police chief Senior Supt. Leo Kison said the woman casualty was found dead inside the house.

"We're still verifying whether she was caught and killed in the crossfire or also an NPA member," he said.

But Nicanor Masupil, councilor of Barangay Ayusan, said the victim was not an NPA rebel. "Her family members were farmers," he told the INQUIRER over the phone.

Masupil said the family had just arrived from Lipa City and were met by the presence of the NPA in their house.

"The NPA asked for food and as it was being prepared, that was the time that the police arrived and the shooting started," he added.

A police report said that at about 4 a.m., a patrolling team from the 415th Provincial Police Mobile Group under Supt. Ricardo Villanueva encountered at least 15 heavily armed communist guerrillas led by a certain Ka Ram.

The report said the police also recovered one M-16 and one M-14 rifles; one .45-caliber pistol with three fully loaded magazines; one bandolier for M-14; one bandolier for M-16; one hand grenade; anti-government documents and backpacks.

Armand Albarillo, spokesperson of Karapatan-Southern Tagalog, has accused the police and the military of conducting alleged harassment activities during the wake of Macalalad and Garcia, whose remains are now lying in a funeral parlor in Tiaong.

He said Mendoza's body had been claimed by the family and had been transported back to Mindoro on Good Friday.

"We're still waiting for the families of the two remaining casualties. As human beings, they still deserve all the rights for a decent burial," Albarillo said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; with a report from Christian Esguerra*

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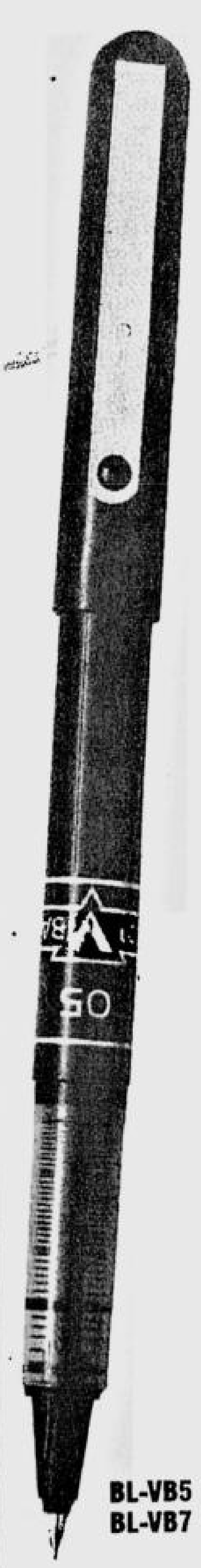

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Bayan defends party-list group on funds charge

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The party-list group Bayan Muna has funded about P50 million worth of projects and services in Central Luzon's seven provinces and in Pangasinan since 2001, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), which claims to be the monitoring arm of the party-list group in the region, said.

Roman Polintan, Bayan-Central Luzon chair, said his group issued the report to dispel the allegations by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales that Bayan Muna and five other party-list groups have been using its Countrywide Development Funds (CDF) to "aid and abet the armed struggle of the New People's Army."

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Polintan, citing the results of monitoring activities, said Bayan Muna used its CDF on "legitimate projects ... that directly benefited the people." He did not refer to an independent audit to support the report.

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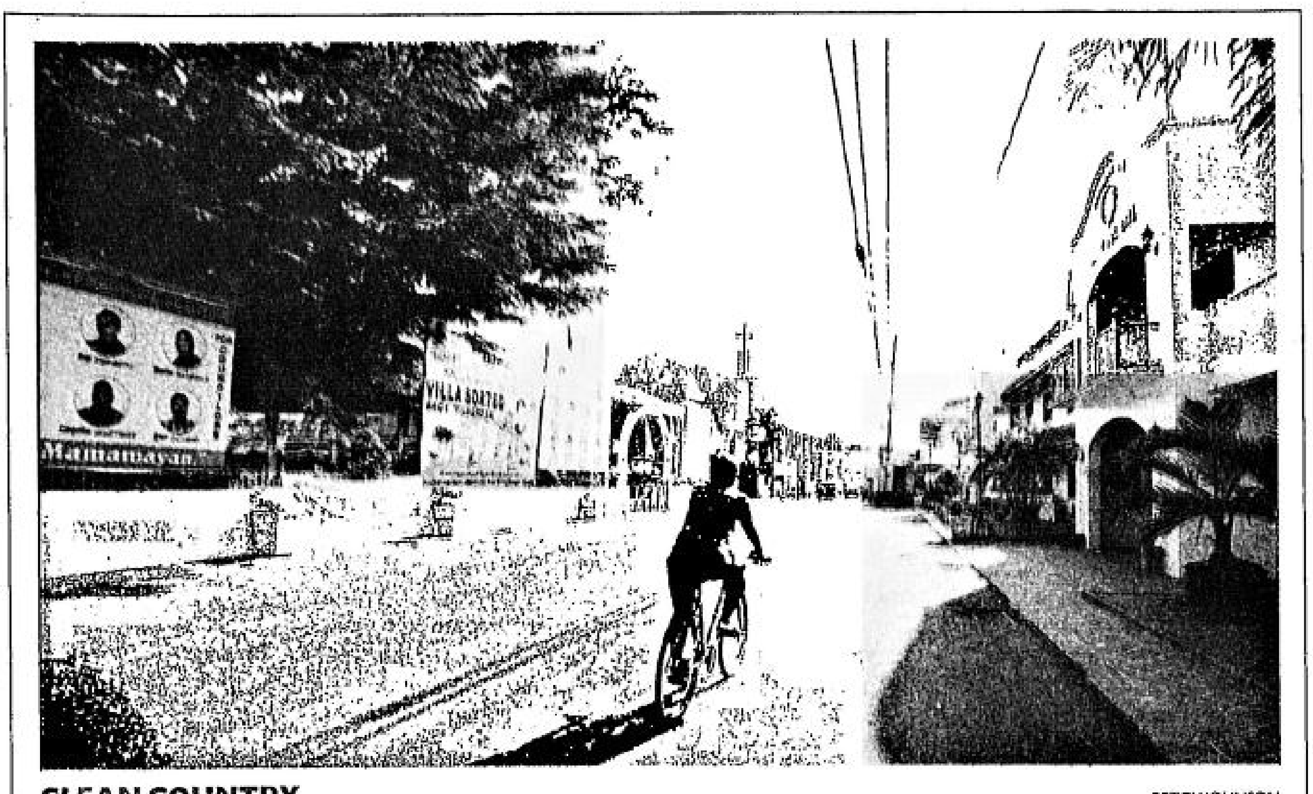
Bayan Muna, he said, carried out the projects in remote areas that are seldom reached by government services.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said his group used its funds on 110 school buildings, 174 daycare and multi-purpose buildings, 109 water systems, 62 farm-to-market roads, streets, bridges, public clinics and medical services in various areas in the country.



CLEAN COUNTRY BETOY JOHNSON
Local candidates in Carmona, Cavite have properly posted their campaign paraphernalia in big billboards in front of the town hall.

Comelec deploys more cops in Negros town

DUMAGUETE CITY—Negros Oriental elections supervisor Rogelio Benjamin has directed the Philippine National Police Provincial Office here to augment the police force in Zamboanguita, a town some 28 km south of here, after suspected rebels lobbed a grenade into the house of the town mayor.

The New People's Army (NPA) in Southeast Negros, in a statement contained in several leaflets disseminated in Zamboanguita shortly before and after the incident, took responsibility for the grenade-throwing incident in front of the house of Mayor Lourdes Adanza.

The leaflets said Adanza, and her husband, provincial board member Marcelo Adanza, who are both seeking reelection, were being given a warning for their refusal to abide by the "no permit, no campaign" policy of the NPA.

The police earlier said the Adanza couple had refused to pay the permit-to-campaign fee demanded from them by the NPA operating in the town.

But board member Adanza said the incident might be politically motivated.

He said he did not have any idea that the NPAs were out to harm him or his family because he has not received any word from the rebels about the permit-to-campaign fee.

Benjamin said he already issued a memorandum to PNP Senior Supt. Amaron B. Morrok, the provincial police director, to deploy additional policemen to Zamboanguita.

He said the town only has 16 policemen and this would not be enough to maintain peace and order in the town, especially with the presence of the rebels.

Benjamin said he did not specify in his memorandum the number of the augmentation force and would leave it up to Morrok to decide how many policemen he could send to the town. *Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Bt corn entry in Mindoro worries agriculturists

CALAPAN CITY—The provincial agriculture office (PAO) here was alarmed at reports by some local agriculture technicians that the controversial Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) corn has been planted in Victoria, Roxas and Bulalacao towns.

A Bt-corn plant looks more attractive, yields more than the regular corn seed and is resistant to cornborers (pests), promoters of the genetically modified product say.

PAO Research Division coordinator Natalia Badillo, said about Bt corn were harvested in two hectares in Roxas.

Some farmers were happy that they did not need to spray pesticides on the corn and that, after about three months, they could earn more by harvesting more than 10 tons per hectare compared to the regular seven tons.

The farmers argued that the corn are not harmful to people because they are fed to animals.

"But people, in turn, take glutinous corn for food," said Badillo.

In Bulalacao, a hectare of land by a Filipina married to a foreigner harvested Bt corn this month, reported PAO's Bulalacao coordinator Anonito Cosico.

Jon Sarmiento, coordinator for Sustainable Agriculture Advocacy Program under the Diocesan Service Commission, confirmed that a hectare of land was planted to Bt corn in Victoria where he lives.

He said he was able to say it was Bt corn because of the price which was pegged at P4,400, compared to P2,500 for regular corn.

A two-hectare demo farm owned by a religious group was also reported to have been planted to Bt corn but the PAO said there is no evidence that it was Bt corn. Another unconfirmed data of Bt corn planted in Naujan town was also reported to PAO.

In a meeting by provincial government officials on Friday, it was agreed that a resolution against Bt corn will be passed so that proper intervention can be undertaken.

Badillo said unless there is a resolution, they cannot do anything because their job is limited to coordinating programs and activities.

Meantime, the Oriental Mindoro Environmental Code, which prohibits the entry of GMOs in the province, has been pending in the provincial board.

But with the elections campaign heating up, residents fear that the issue will be put off.

"This is an urgent issue because when rains come, for sure, corn will be planted," said Badillo. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Grenade explosion rocks Antique village; 10 injured

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Ten persons including three children were injured when a rifle grenade accidentally exploded on Good Friday in a hinterland village in San Remigio town, 22 km from the capital town of San Jose, Antique.

Reports reaching the Antique Provincial Police Office (APPO) in San Jose identified the injured as Job Gomez, 36; Mary Ann Cabaya, 17; Ruben Fernando, 11; Jake Gomez, 8; Blas Fernando, 48; Gringo Gomez, 42; Sarah Mariano, 26; Elsa Fernando, 45; Gemma Gomez, 28; and Christine Joy Gomez, 5.

The victims, all residents of Barangay Walker, some 4 km from the town proper, were among those who had gathered at the village plaza after attending religious rites when the grenade exploded at around 4:30 p.m.

They were taken to the Angel Salazar Memorial General Hospital in San Jose were they were treated for shrapnel wounds mostly in their legs. All the victims except for Job, Jake and Cabaya were later released from the hospital.

Citing a report of the San Remigio police, the APPO report said Blas Fernando found the rifle grenade near the Maninila River in the neighboring village of Rizal.

Apparently failing to recognize the object as a grenade, Blas attached it to one end of a stick that he used as a walking cane, which he brought to his house in Barangay Walker.

The cane was later brought to the plaza by Job Gomez, according to the police report. It was not clear how the grenade exploded but the police reports surmised that children in the plaza played with the cane.

The APPO report failed to identify the owner of the grenade and how it reached the river.

ROUNDUP

Killing of rebs denied

DAVAO CITY—The New People's Army (NPA) has denied reports that six of its members were killed in an encounter with government troops on March 29 in Purok 15, Barangay Awao, Monkayo, Compostela Valley. Boni Amante, spokesperson of the NPA's Alejandro Lanaja Command, said in a statement that those killed were members of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu). Amante said the Cafgu members under the 36th Infantry Battalion clashed with the members of the pro-Army Remnants of the Family of God who were mistaken as NPA rebels. Amante said Remnants is a religious group with most of its members allegedly armed by the military and used as a private army of politicians. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Shabu trader gets jail term

URDANETA CITY—A judge here sentenced a woman to 12-20 years in prison for selling 100 milligrams of shabu. Judge Joven Costales of the regional trial court here found Nerisa Acurantes, 36, of Barangay San Vicente West, guilty of selling illegal drugs in a buy-bust operation by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency on Nov. 19, 2002. Costales, known as Pangasinan's hanging judge, ordered Acurantes to pay P100,000 as fine. *Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

NPA rebs arrested

ILAGAN, Isabela—Three suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels were arrested after an encounter with soldiers and policemen in Piat, Cagayan, on Friday. Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano, Cagayan Valley regional police director, identified the arrested rebels as Cristina Miguel, Lolita Raza and Manny de Guzman, all of the NPA's Northern Front Committee operating in Cagayan. Miguel and De Guzman were wounded in the encounter and were taken to a hospital for treatment. Reports said government troops recovered a .38 cal. pistol, two hand grenades and anti-government documents from the suspects. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Amok injures 4

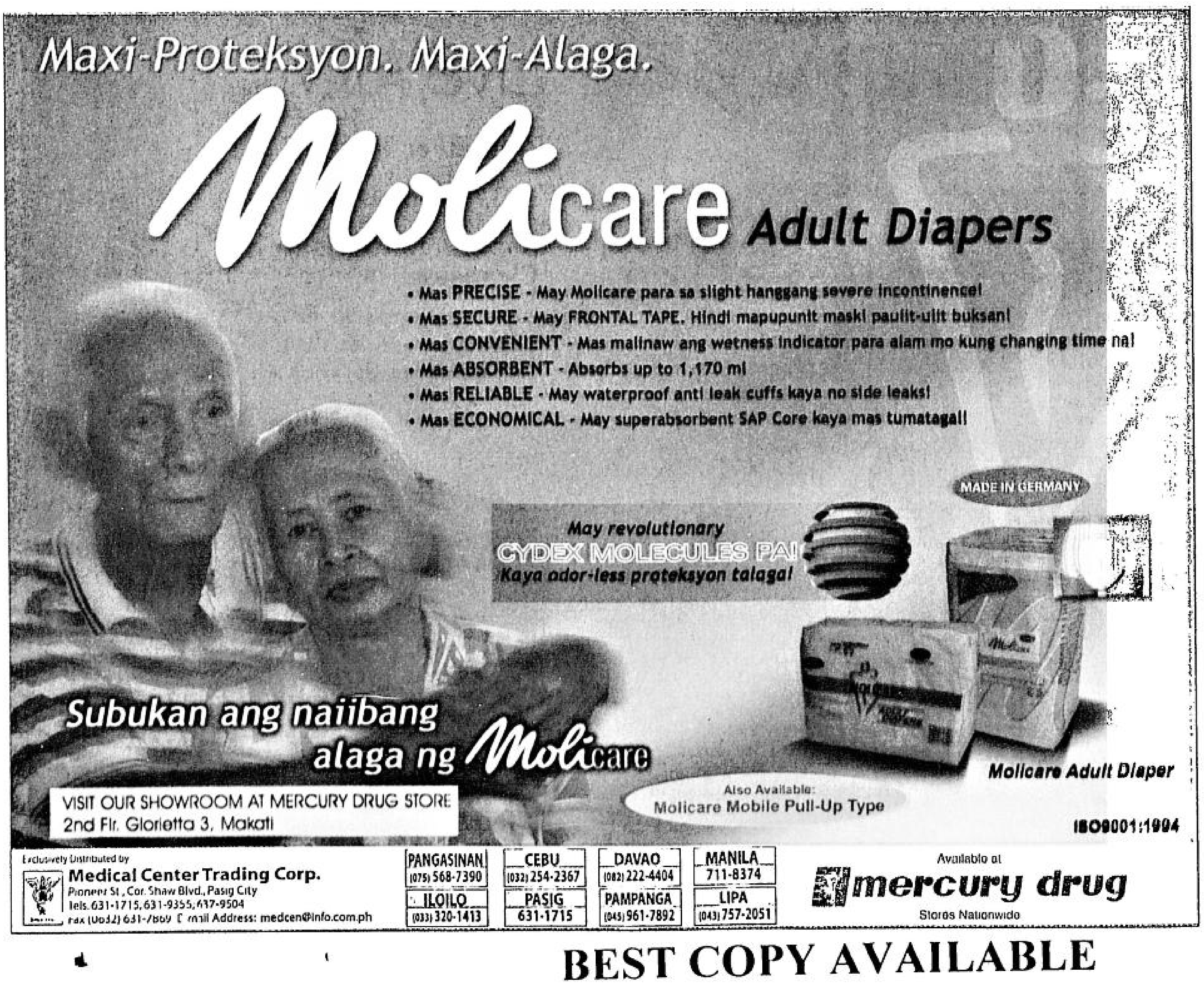
TABACO CITY—A resort worker who ran amuck on Palm Sunday hurt two new high school graduates and three others. Nestor Astor, a worker at Dhio Endheka Resort located in Barangay Buang here, ran berserk at around 8 a.m. while excursionists were arriving. Astor, armed with a 58-centimeter bolo, hacked resort cook Luis de los Santos, 52, neighbor Amado Bataller, 76, Tabaco National High School graduate Melissa Anonuevo, 17, and classmate Frederick Crisol. The four have been brought to hospitals here. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Candidates' forum

CALAPAN CITY—A seminar for city candidates held April 5 at the Benedictine Monastery in Barangay Salong, resulted in the signing of a covenant for honest elections. The seminar was participated in by most candidates, except for three. The Commission on Elections city office said that in the history of this city, this year has the most number of candidates for the mayoral post, with five, and councilors, with 44. Participants to the seminar were the Philippine National Police, Rotary Club of Downtown of Calapan (for the non-governmental organizations), Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and local media. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Alert on mining firm

CALAPAN CITY—The Oriental Mindoro provincial government, through Gov. Bartolome Marasigan Sr., has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo for clarification on the reported reinstatement of the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement of the Mindoro nickel project. The report was based on a press release by Crew Gold Corp. dated March 24. The Manila-based non-government organization Legal Resource Center said it has monitored the press release and is waiting for official documents from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*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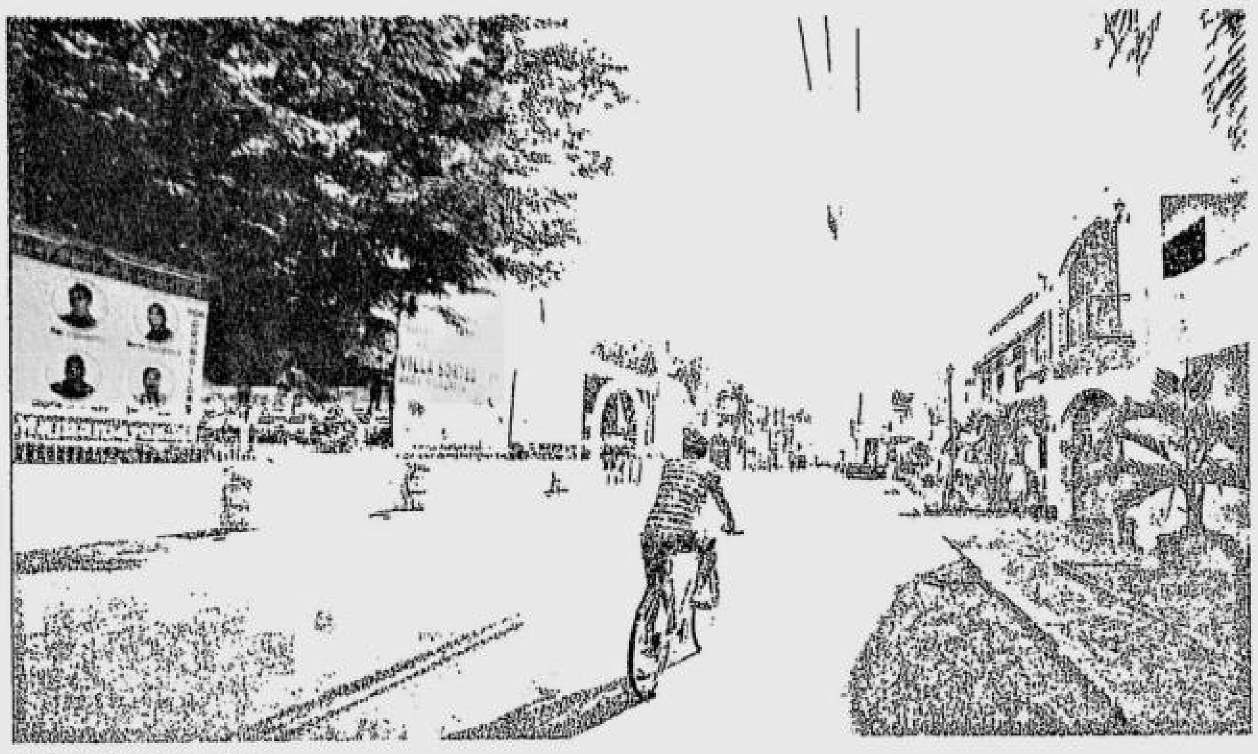

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The police earlier said the Adanza couple had refused to pay the permit-to-campaign fee demanded from them by the NPA operating in the town.

But board member Adanza said the incident might be politically motivated.

He said he did not have any idea that the NPAs were out to harm him or his family because he has not received any word from the rebels about the permit-to-campaign fee.

Benjamin said he already issued a memorandum to PNP Senior Supt. Amaron B. Morrok, the provincial police director, to deploy additional policemen to Zamboanguita.

He said the town only has 16 policemen and this would not be enough to maintain peace and order in the town, especially with the presence of the rebels.

Benjamin said he did not specify in his memorandum the number of the augmentation force and would leave it up to Morrok to decide how many policemen he could send to the town.
Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

Bt corn entry in Mindoro worries agriculturists

[illegible]APAN CITY—The provincial agricultur[illegible] office (PAO) [illegible] was alarmed at re[illegible] [illegible] agriculture technicians [illegible] controversial Bt (*Bacillus* [illegible]) [illegible] has been planted in [illegible]oria, R[illegible] and Bulalacao towns.

[illegible] Bt corn plant looks more attrac[illegible] more than the regular corn [illegible] resistant to cornborers [illegible] the genetically [illegible] modified produ[illegible]

PAO R[illegible] Division coordinator [illegible] said about Bt corn were [illegible] two hectares in Roxas.

[illegible] happy that they [illegible] pesticides on the corn and that, after about three months, they could earn more by harvesting more than 10 tons per hectare compared to the regular seven tons.

The farmers argued that the corn are not harmful to people because they are fed to animals.

"But people, in turn, take glutinous corn for food," said Badillo.

In Bulalacao, a hectare of land by a Filipina married to a foreigner harvested Bt corn this month, reported PAO's Bulalacao coordinator Anonito Cosico.

Jon Sarmiento, coordinator for Sustainable Agriculture Advocacy Program under the Diocesan Service Commission, confirmed that a hectare of land was planted to Bt corn in Victoria where [illegible] lives.

He said he was able to say [illegible] corn because of the price which [illegible] pegged at P4,400, compared to P2[illegible]00 for regular corn.

A two-hectare demo farm owned by a religious group was also reported to have been planted to Bt corn but the PAO said there is no evidence that it was Bt corn. Another unconfirmed data of Bt corn planted in Naujan town was also reported to PAO.

In a meeting by provincial [illegible] ment officials on Friday, [illegible] as a [illegible] that a resolution against Bt corn [illegible] passed so that proper inter[illegible] [illegible]ndetta.

Badillo said unless there is a resolu[illegible] the[illegible] cannot do anything because the [illegible] limited to coordinating pro[illegible] ram [illegible]

[illegible] Oriental Mindoro En[illegible] Code, which prohibits the [illegible] GMOs in the province, has been [illegible] provincial board.

Bu[illegible] the elections campaign heat [illegible] that the issue w[illegible]

[illegible] because [illegible] the corn [illegible] be [illegible] Badillo. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Grenade explosion rocks Antique village; 10 injured

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
[illegible]

[illegible]ITY—Ten persons including [illegible] were injured when a rifle [illegible] accidentally exploded on Good [illegible] hinterland village in San [illegible] 22 km from the capital [illegible] San Jose, Antique.

Repo[illegible]s reaching the Antique Provincial Pol[illegible] Office (APPO) in San Jose [illegible] the injured as Job Gomez, 36; Mary Ann Cabaya, 17; Ruben Fernando, 11; Jake Gomez, 8; Blas Fernando, 48; Gringo Gomez, 42; Sarah Mariano, 26; Elsa Fernando, 45; Gemma Gomez, 28; and Christine Joy Gomez [illegible].

The victims, all residents of Barangay Walker, some 4 km from the town proper, were among those who had gathered at the village plaza after attending religious rites when the grenade exploded at around 4:30 p.m.

They were taken to the Angel Salazar Memorial General Hospital in San Jose were they were treated for shrapnel wounds mostly in their legs. All the victims except for Job, Jake and Cabaya were later released from the hospital.

Citing a report of the San Remigio police, the APPO report said Blas Fernando found the rifle grenade near the Maninila River in the neighboring village of Rizal.

Apparently failing to recognize the object as a grenade, Blas attached it to [illegible] brought to [illegible] Barangay Walker [illegible] late brought to the [illegible] Job Gomez, according to the police report. It was not clear how the grenade exploded but the police reports [illegible] children [illegible] the plaza [illegible] can[illegible]

The APPO report failed to identify [illegible] grenade and how [illegible]

ROUNDUP

Killing of rebs denied

DAVAO [illegible]—The New People's Army (NPA) has denied reports that [illegible] of its members were killed [illegible] March 29 [illegible] Purok 15, Barangay Awa[illegible] Monka[illegible] Compostela Valley. Boni Amante, spokesperson of the NPA's Alejandro [illegible] Command, said [illegible] statement that those killed were members of the [illegible] Armed Forces Geographical Unit, Cafgu. Amante said the Cafgu members [illegible] 66th Infantry Battalion clashed with [illegible] members of the [illegible] Army. Re[illegible] of the Family of God who were mistaken [illegible] NPA rebels. Amante said Re[illegible] group with the [illegible]
Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Shabu trader gets jail term

URDANETA C[illegible]—A judge [illegible] sentenced [illegible] to 12 [illegible] years [illegible] shabu [illegible] judge [illegible] were found Nensa Acurante [illegible] Ba[illegible] West [illegible] operation by the Philippine Drug [illegible] Agency No. 19 [illegible] Pangasinan [illegible] to pay P100,000 [illegible] fin[illegible]
Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

NPA rebs arrested

ILAGAN, [illegible] Isabela [illegible] suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebel [illegible] arrested after [illegible] with soldiers [illegible] Friday [illegible] rebel [illegible] Miguel [illegible] Guzman [illegible] of the NPA's [illegible] operating [illegible] wounded in the encounter a[illegible] hospital for treatment. Reports [illegible] recovered a 38 [illegible] anti-[illegible]
Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Amok injures

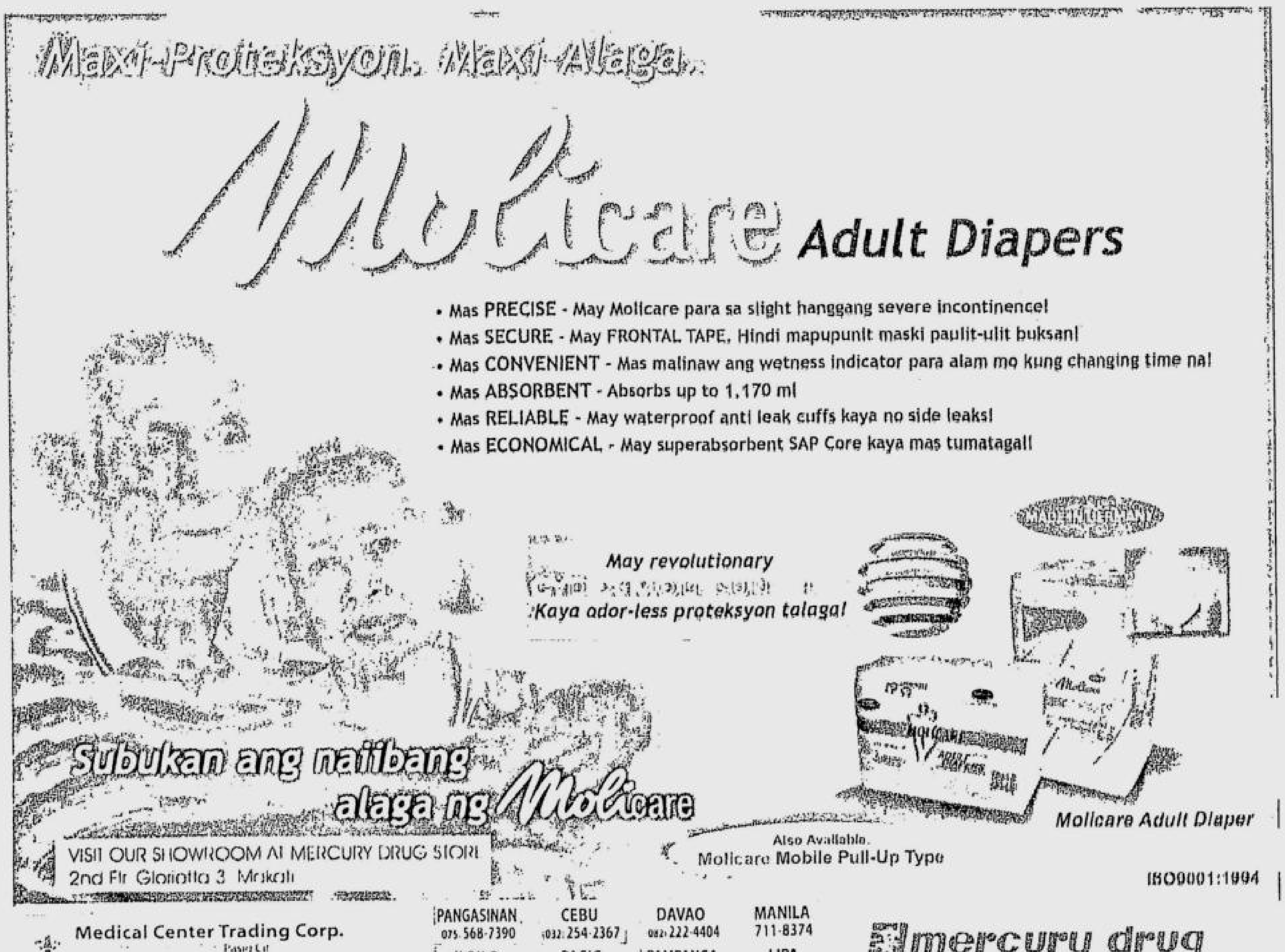
TABAC[illegible] Palm Sunday [illegible] and three others [illegible] Nest [illegible] Heka Resort located [illegible] berserk at around 8 a.m. [illegible] Astor armed with [illegible] hacked resort [illegible] Amado Bataller, 76, Tabaco National High [illegible] graduate Melissa Ame[illegible] [illegible] here.
Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Candidates' forum

CALAPAN CITY—A [illegible] April [illegible] at the Benedictine Monastery [illegible] Salong, resulted [illegible] honest election [illegible] by [illegible] candidates [illegible] for [illegible] Election [illegible] of the city, the [illegible] dates for the [illegible] with 44 participants [illegible] Philippine National P[illegible] town of Calapan [illegible] zation [illegible] Voting [illegible] *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Alert on mining firm

CALAPAN [illegible] government the [illegible] Bart[illegible] M. S[illegible] has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo [illegible] cation on the report [illegible] the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement of the Mi[illegible] nickel pr[illegible] lease by [illegible] dated March 24 [illegible] Ma[illegible] [illegible] the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.
Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau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Media asked to help draw pols to citizens' issues

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Recognizing the role of media in influencing voters, nongovernment organizations here have asked journalists to help make their various agenda become electoral issues.

Issues such as family planning and population, poverty, environment, transparency and governance now compete with political advertisements for public attention as the May 10 election nears. The only difference is that news on such issues are printed or aired at no cost to NGOs.

Among the groups that enlisted the help of media to carry their issues are the Family Planning Organization of the Philippines (FPOP) and the Philippine NGO Council for Population, Health and Welfare (PNGOC). Both were buoyed up by the results of the March 2004 surveys of Pulse Asia showing that majority of Filipinos think candidates favoring family planning issues should be supported rather than rejected by voters.

In the survey, 82 to 86 percent of Filipinos said candidates in favor of couples' free choice of family planning, the issues that ought to be supported are a law on population issues, a government budget for family planning and a program on women's health.

FPOP and PNGOC gave out results of the Pulse Asia surveys to reporters. PNGOC also helped fund a forum with candidates where questions on family planning, population and women's health were asked.

Eden Divinagracia, executive director of PNGOC, asked journalists to refer to the Pulse Asia survey when asking on women's health during town hall meetings and forum with the candidates. She said it is important that voters know the candidates' position on family planning and population.

Given the state of the country's economy, the public could not afford another three to six years without a strong population and women's and children's health program, she said.

PNGOC gave out a list of questions to ask candidates, and these range from whether they know what reproductive health is; their views on modern contraceptives; their stand on pre-marital sex and if they are willing to support the integration of reproductive health concepts in the school curriculum.

Social Watch, an umbrella of nongovernment organizations that advocate the eradication of poverty, recently met the press to discuss the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Sponsored by the United Nations, the MDG is a set of global targets to eradicate poverty and hunger, promote gender equality and access to education and environmental sustainability.

Jessica Dator Bercilla, coordinator of Social Watch in this city, said journalists could make use of MDG when asking questions to candidates during press conferences. They may also use them to frame their stories and evaluate the track record of the incumbents.

"The media, as a powerful actor in development, can help facilitate broader and deeper understanding of development issues," she said.

The Center for Community Journalism and Development also helped members of the Iloilo City Hall Press Corps to hold a candidates forum last Saturday for those seeking the posts of congressman, mayor and vice mayor.

During the forum, representatives of people's organizations and civic associations pinned down the candidates to give solutions to traffic, slums, lack of jobs, floods and other woes.

DILG exec in C. Mindanao hurt in attack

COTABATO CITY—Unidentified gunmen shot and seriously wounded the director of the Department of Interior and Local Government in Central Mindanao on Good Friday.

Sr. Insp. Roger Legazpi, police station 2 chief, said the suspects barged into the house of Buagas Sulaik in Barangay Rosary Heights 3 here around 3:30 a.m.

He said the suspects were trying to rob Sulaik but created some noise. Sulaik was awakened and got up to check on it. But as Sulaik was emerging from his bedroom, one of the suspects fired his gun, hitting the executive in the abdomen. The suspects then fled with the victim's mobile phone. *Edwin O. Fernandez and Rosa-May V. de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Mayoral bet faces disqualification

LEGAZPI CITY—A mayoral candidate in Aroroy, Masbate is facing a disqualification case for violation of the Commission on Elections gun ban.

Filed last Monday at the Comelec central office in Manila, the case for violation of the 1978 Election Code was filed against Aroroy mayoral candidate Danilo P. Corpuz, by incumbent Mayor Vicente P. Maristela Jr.

Corpuz, a civilian and three police officers were arrested on March 10 by Masbate police headed by deputy police chief Supt. Paulino Rañada Jr. for illegally possessing firearms.

The three policemen were arrested for securing a candidate without a Comelec order.

Included in Maristela's complaints was Masbate City fiscal Freddie Sierra, who was inhibited from handling the case, being the respondent's personal legal counsel.

In his complaint, Maristela said the group of Corpuz was caught red-handed in front of his office and detained at Camp Bonnie Serrano, but no inquest was conducted by the city prosecutor of Masbate.

Until press time, Corpuz and Sierra failed to give comment on the issue.

Meanwhile, Rañada identified the policemen they caught armed and escorting Corpuz as PO1 Jojo S. Gojo, PO1 Crispin H. Desalisa and PO1 Eric P. Buena, all members of the Bravo Company, 5th Regional Mobile Group based in Monreal, Masbate.

The civilian was identified as Divino D. Gonzales, a retired policeman and resident of Aroroy town. *Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau.*

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(April 5 / May 3) Filmmaking for Kids - I & II
(April 5) Audio Production - I

(April 6 / May 4) Directing - I & II
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(May 3) Digital Audio Protools) - I
(May 4) Film Appreciation - I
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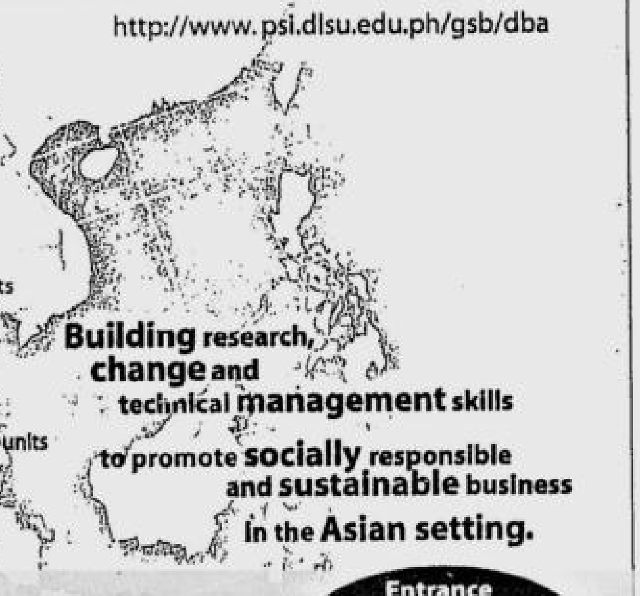

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Jail officials warned of Abu escape plot, says AFP

From page A1

"This will greatly affect the momentum in our fight against terrorism, particularly in Basilan, but this should not deter us from recapturing them," Lucero said.

Inside job?

President Macapagal-Arroyo said the government would do its best to rectify any mistake by conducting a thorough probe into the jailbreak. She hinted that it was possible it could have been facilitated by an insider.

The inmates, led by 24 Abu Sayyaf bandits facing kidnapping and murder charges, used a pistol smuggled inside a papaya fruit by a wife of one of the Abu inmates to launch their escape attempt.

"Since it was time for meal, the guard was not able to check her," said Chief Supt. Isnaji Bantala, police director of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Bantila said the woman handed the gun to her husband, identified as Samir Langis, from Sumisip town.

It was Langis who forced one of the guards to open the padlock of the cell, where he and 23 other Abu Sayyaf members were being kept, and then shot him as they dashed to the gate.

Other inmates wrestled the guns of the other guards.

Langis' wife is now being tracked down.

Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar issued tough orders for the recapture of those still at large, including Abu Sayyaf leader Mubin Ibba, alias Abu Black.

'Shoot them down'

"I told (the military and the police) to fire on the fugitives," Akbar told the INQUIRER.

Ibba is among those allegedly involved in the beheading of Californian tourist Guillermo Sobero, one of 20 hostages seized by the terrorists from the Dos Palmas tourist resort in Palawan in June 2000.

Of the eight inmates killed during the jailbreak, five were Abu Sayyaf, the military said. There were also five Abu bandits from among the 20 so far recovered.

Officials earlier said guard Solamo Ejercito Jr. was killed when the inmates stormed out, but Akbar said the guard was alive although in a serious condition.

"Because of the confusion, we declared him dead," the governor said. "Our apologies."

It was not clear if Akbar's call for pursuing troops to "fire on the fugitives" amounted to a shoot-to-kill order.

Col. Raymundo Ferrer, head of the Army's 104th Infantry Brigade, said he understood that a shoot-to-kill order only applied to instances when fugitives resisted.

"If they have no guns and they would not resist, they would not be shot," Ferrer said.

He said the government was taking all steps to prevent the escaped inmates from reaching other islands.

Basilan sealed off

"We have alerted all the Cafgu and CVO detachment, more checkpoints established, covering all the island barangays to ensure that they could not slip out of Basilan," Ferrer said.

Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. has ordered an investigation into the escape, which has become a new source of embarrassment for the Macapagal administration.

The investigation will determine if the jailbreak was a result of conspiracy or simply negligence on the part of jail officials, PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao said.

"The concentration now is on the manhunt but we also want to know what went wrong," Goltiao told the INQUIRER.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina clarified that the Basilan jail was not under the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, an agency under his office, but run by the provincial government under the ARMM.

The military said it was not easy to recapture the inmates considering the island's terrain. "It's vast and surrounded by islands," Lucero said, adding that it was also possible for the escaped inmates to use small boats to move up north to Zamboanga.

Witnesses afraid

With about half of the escapees still at large, Lucero said several witnesses against the Abu Sayyaf men feared the bandits would retaliate.

Most of the witnesses are from Basilan. So are the members of the bandit group involved in the jailbreak.

"We've been getting a lot of text (messages), many witnesses are afraid because of the escape," Lucero said. "We have coordinated with the Southern Command to protect the witnesses."

Ms Macapagal sought to downplay the impact of the incident. She told reporters at the Perpetual Help College in Biñan, Laguna: "We have had our share of victories but there are also things that happen that we do not like. This is the nature of the war against terrorism."

She said the public should not forget the victories achieved by the government in the antiterror campaign. She cited the recent capture of six suspected Abu Sayyaf members with explosives allegedly to be used in bombings in Metro Manila, and the killing of Hamsiraji Sali, a senior Abu commander.

Sali was one of five Abu Sayyaf leaders for whose capture the United States has offered a $5-million bounty.

Last month, American officials expressed concern to Ms Macapagal over reports of possible terror threats in the country and urged her in a late-night meeting to "stay focused" in battling terrorists, a Western diplomat said, according to AP.

Ms Macapagal renewed her antiterror crackdown after the March 22 meeting with US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli and other American officials, announcing on March 30 the arrests of the six suspected Abu Sayyaf.

US officials were relieved over the arrests, AP said. It quoted the unnamed diplomat as saying: "They raised their concerns with her and asked that the government stay focused on counterterrorism and perceived threats. My impression was that they saw a heightened threat."

Davao, Cagayan de Oro alert

The Abu Sayyaf, blacklisted by Washington as a terrorist organization, is notorious for ransom kidnappings in which some hostages have been beheaded. It has claimed responsibility for bombing the SuperFerry 14 which caught fire after a loud explosion in late February, killing more than 100 people.

In Davao city, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said he had been directed by the President to raise the alert level in his area following intelligence reports that terrorists planned to attack the city.

Duterte told the local ABS-CBN channel that during their talk, Ms Macapagal also mentioned about a terrorist threat in Cagayan de Oro City.

"There is a bomb threat. There were series of instructions coming from the President," he said.

Bombs blamed on Moro extremists killed 48 people near a Davao wharf last year.

The Basilan breakout was the latest in a series of stunning escapes by suspected terrorists that have embarrassed the government.

Indonesian Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi, a suspected bomb expert in the regional Jemaah Islamiya terror network, escaped last year from the tightly guarded national police headquarters in Manila. He was later killed by police. *With reports from Dennis Jay C. Santos, Anthony S. Allada and Rex G. Ortega, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Fipronil is the active ingredient of Termidor and Goliath Gel. As a result of the divestment process BASF now owns the trademarks, TERMIDOR and GOLIATH GEL.

Under the license back agreement, BASF has agreed however that BayerCropScience - through its business unit, Bayer Environmental Science - would be allowed to exclusively market fipronil for non crop application in South East Asia. Bayer Environmental Science decided that it would register a new brand name but with exactly the same active ingredient.

In the Philippines, AGENDA 2.5 EC is a trademark owned by Bayer CropScience that was approved to replace the brand name TERMIDOR 2.5 EC, a termiticide; MAXFORCE GEL on the other hand is a trademark of Bayer CropScience that would also replace Goliath Gel for cockroach control. Agenda 2.5 EC in the Philippines is exactly the same formulation containing exactly the same active ingredient as Termidor and Maxforce Gold is an improved formulation of Goliath Gel containing exactly the same active ingredient, ie fipronil.

We assure the public that the highest quality standard used by us in the past would be the same benchmark we will use for our renamed products, AGENDA 2.5 EC and MAXFORCE GEL.

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NEW POLITICS, NEW HOPE

*(A Statement of the **University of Santo Tomas** on the May 10, 2004 National Election)*

EASTER generates the hope that death and dissolution are but a prelude to life and profusion. It affords us the promise that the struggles of today are redemptive, that they are nothing but the victories of a new tomorrow. "Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive?" the angel asked Christ's mourners. *(Luke 24:5)* Truly, He is resurrected. And truly, Easter means a new world, a new way of doing things.

It is with the vision of Easter that we should regard Philippine democracy.

Our democracy faces another test on May 10, 2004. The test this time is not only of the pernicious verities of Philippine politics—of guns, goons, gold, and perhaps, coups—but also of one that strikes at the heart of the democratic enterprise: the test of relevance and integrity.

Nearly 20 years after its restoration, Philippine democracy faces the crisis of relevance and credibility. The crisis seems the making of Philippine democracy itself, which is characterized by perpetual inchoateness. Since 1986, all that the body politic could show is a series of vacuous rhetoric, horse-trading, false starts, and unmitigated mediocrity. Since 1986, democracy has not grown in grace; it has merely grown in hollowness. The thunder of the election season has merely obscured that fact.

It is time to put a stop to the sorry spectacle of Philippine democracy. To do this, we should however banish our cynicism and engage constructively with Philippine politics, warts and all. Arming ourselves with hope, we should:

Vote conscientiously. We should choose candidates with moral integrity and with a track record in know-how, vision, and work ethic. The Thomasian values of competence, commitment and compassion apply universally in the people's discernment of aspirants for elective office. To be sure, especially for the presidency and other national offices, more than a modicum of constitutional credentials is needed. For some sectors to say that somebody is qualified for national office because he or she is "nice", "sincere", and "well-liked" or "well-loved" is to cheapen national office. On the other hand, excellent credentials should be balanced by truthfulness and integrity. Just as it is not enough to be sincere and popular, it is not enough to be brilliant.

Bind the candidates to their word. We should condemn the calculated silence of some candidates and compel them to speak their mind. Campaign strategists have so exploited the characteristic spell exerted by celebrities and personalities on Filipinos so that they feel that their candidates, whom they surround with the patina of show business (if the aspirants are not show-biz folks themselves) can win the ballot by taking a vow of silence. The silence of some candidates disguises their dull minds while betraying their dark motives. By not addressing the issues, they deprive the people of making an intelligent choice. Their silence means they are enemies of democracy.

Uphold solidarity. We should vote those who will work for solidarity with the poor and the weak. The majority of our people are the victims of the depredations of clannish, unreformed traditional politicians, whether young or old, an over-regimented and battened bureaucracy, whether civilian or military, a vicious oligarchy, a mercenary entertainment complex, and profiteering businessmen. National reconstruction may involve a healing of old wounds and a blurring of the line that divides old and new guard, we should not go for easy compromises. We should strive for reconciliation and charity, but never at the cost of truth and justice.

Therefore, toward May 10, let us not indulge in circus entertainment that has become the staple of our political system. Let us reject the politics of silence and cosmetics that perpetuates the spell on the people of the photogenic and the ignominious. Let us banish escapism and fight for the truth. Let us work for truthful elections.

Democracy, not entertainment!
Freedom, not fantasy!
Truth and justice, not escapism!

Onwards 2011...

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Indon voters show revulsion for corruption

From page A1

completed in at least another week, it appeared that support for Megawati and the PDI-P had slumped. Her share of the vote shrank from 33 percent in 1999. Golkar's share is nearly the same as that in 1999. The elections indicated a significant shift of the votes to smaller parties, which were perceived as more honest than the two bigger ones.

The shift went to the fledgling Democratic Party of Gen. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, a former security minister, and the Islamic Justice and Prosperity Party (KPS). With both the PDI-P heavily tainted by corruption and Suharto tagged by the Transparency International as the most corrupt leader in the past two decades, the voters showed their revulsion of corruption by migrating toward the two smaller parties, which ran on strong anti-corruption platforms. Democratic Party got 7.3 percent.

Yudhoyono has emerged the dark horse and Megawati's chief rival, not Golkar, which is led by parliamentary Speaker Akbar Tandjung who has been tarred by corruption charges.

The early results indicated that the PDI-P and Golkar did not receive enough votes to form a government on their own right, setting the stage for a protracted coalition building for the presidential election in July. For the first time since 1955, Indonesians, under a new electoral system, will vote directly for their president.

In last week's parliamentary elections, where 550 seats were at stake, Indonesians voted for candidates, as well as for parties. In the past, Indonesian elections were elected not directly but by members of the highest constitutional organ, the People's Constituent Assembly.

Decisive leadership

With the two major parties unable to win sufficient votes to form a government, Megawati, who has been regarded as a weak leader, is sitting on a precarious ledge.

The Jakarta Post said the electorate had sent a clear message: "Indonesians have had enough of corruption and injustice, and … many of them yearn for a change to a strong and decisive leadership to steer the nation out of its present problems."

At the same time, the paper urged the elite to "take the Indonesian electorate seriously and stop making promises (you) do not intend to keep."

The Financial Times of London was scathing, describing Megawati as "a weak president who rose to power by default and whose aloofness and unease in public makes her one of Asia's most improbable politicians." The Times said that what Indonesia needed most was a strong leader—"a government that knows how to exercise power."

The Economist magazine predicted that once the dust settled, the tenor of Indonesian politics would remain the same. "The successful presidential candidate will almost certainly be a secular nationalist of some sort," it said. "And the government he or she forms will probably be a coalition of all the major parties, just as the current one is."

Dark horse

While the Straits Times of Singapore called Yudhoyono a "dark horse who has emerged as Megawati's most serious rival, Jakarta's Republika, described the rise of Yudhoyono's party as extraordinary. "It is unbelievable how a party with unknown members, except one figure, has succeeded in getting sympathy from a lot of people."

The Sydney Morning Herald said Yudhoyono "must now be the favourite, not only because his party has come from nowhere but also because so many people consider him the cleanest of the candidates."

To stand for presidential election in July, a candidate's party has to win more than 5 percent of the vote. Yudhoyono's party won more than double the required vote.

The general quit the Megawati Cabinet after a public row over the government's handling of the campaign to flush out terrorists following the terrorist bombing of Bali. The 55-year-old general is described as "urbane, friendly to the West" and has caught public attention for his antiterrorist campaign.

In the Philippines, just four weeks before the presidential election, a standoff of a different sort has emerged. President Macapagal-Arroyo and Fernando Poe Jr. are locked in a statistical tie, but unlike in Indonesia, no dark horse or a "man of the hour" has emerged to break the tie. Neither Raul Roco nor Panfilo Lacson has stepped into that role.

Second round

The new Indonesian election system of direct presidential election provides a process that allows for a second-round runoff if the first stage—the parliamentary elections—failed to produce a party with a vote that can form a government on its own right.

Among presidential systems, the Philippines' direct presidential election is one of the few without a runoff that would allow the formation of a government with a majority vote.

Golkar's candidate for presidential nomination, Tandjung, has claimed that Golkar is becoming the winner on the basis of partial results showing that it was tailing Megawati's party by only a couple of points. Tandjung has dismissed the possibility of an alliance with Megawati.

As Indonesian democracy evolves after three decades of Suharto's authoritarian rule, its new election system sees to it that it does not get trapped in a rigid system with a directly elected president without the legitimacy of a majority mandate.

Pope prays mankind …

From page A1

poverty and terrorism—and his remarks this year appeared particularly directed to the fresh violence in Iraq and the ongoing hostilities between Israel and the Palestinians.

Dressed in golden robes and a jeweled miter, the 83-year-old Pope was alert and spoke clearly throughout the Mass, despite having struggled through a three-hour Easter Vigil that ended just a few hours earlier.

John Paul celebrated Easter Mass under a hazy and chilly sky, surrounded by cardinals in red and an arch of pink tulips and yellow daffodils arranged around the altar on the steps of St. Peter's.

At one point during the ceremony, he laughed heartily as a toddler in traditional Asian dress struggled up the stairs of the basilica toward him with her parents and brother to present offerings. He reached out to her and blessed her and the rest of the family.

He later delivered his annual Easter greetings in 62 different languages.

Security was relatively tight around St. Peter's Square on Sunday, with Italian police and Carabinieri officers checking the bags of pilgrims and tourists as they entered the piazza and a ring of police cars at its edge.

Italy stepped up security around the Vatican, monuments, airports and other sites over the Easter holiday, as it did during Christmas.

Easter vigil

During the long Easter vigil service on Saturday night at the packed St. Peter's Basilica, John Paul blessed the flame of a tall candle. Looking weak and speaking with great effort, the Pontiff baptized people from Europe, Africa and Asia in a solemn, chant-filled ceremony.

The Pope's right hand trembled as he poured water from a gold-colored, shell-shaped scooper over the heads of a young man from Italy, a toddler from Togo, two Japanese women in kimonos, and three others during baptism.

Earlier, John Paul slowly leaned forward in his chair to insert five grains of incense into the cream-colored candle's wax.

"Very dear brothers and sons, in this most holy night, in which Jesus Christ our Lord, passed from death to life, the Church, spread throughout the Earth, calls her children to hold a vigil of prayer," John Paul said. He then blessed the flame and intoned a prayer in Latin.

John Paul gripped the candle as he was wheeled in his chair up the center aisle of a darkened basilica. Thousands of faithful held small candles whose flames sparked in the darkness. After a deacon's sung phrase, "Lumen Christi" (Light of Christ, in Latin), rang out through the cavernous basilica for a third time, the lights went on in the basilica.

When the vigil service ended, after a little more than three hours, the basilica resounded with applause from the crowd, relieved that the Pontiff made it through the entire ceremony. The Pope mustered the strength to kiss the head of a baby brought to him as he was being wheeled out of the basilica.

The ailing Pope pronounced his words with great effort. But he appeared to gain strength a couple of hours into the service, delivering his entire homily.

He told the new Catholics that they were entering a Church "which is an immense people on a pilgrimage, without limits of race, language or culture."

John Paul suffers from Parkinson's disease, which makes speaking and walking difficult. Hip and knee problems also make it impossible for the Pontiff to navigate the basilica's sprawling dimensions without assistance. *AP*

Small load means big bucks for telcos

From page A1

does not own a mobile phone.

But she has her own SIM card, and on borrowed phones, she racks up charges of about P500 per month, mainly by sending text messages at a cost of one peso per message.

"Sometimes, I spend more on the phone than I spend on the rent," she said.

Getting poor customers to spend money on cell phones is a skill local telecom operators have honed to perfection. Their newest strategy is "sachet marketing"—selling airtime in such small quantities that even the poor can afford it.

Consumer goods companies have long known that to do business in Third World countries they need to sell shampoo and detergent in tiny sachets rather than big bottles.

The application of this model by local telecom companies has broadened their potential market and sets an example for other Third World countries, such as India and China.

"The secret is selling in very small doses. It is telecom services in sachets," said Ramon Isberto, spokesperson for Smart Communications Inc, the mobile arm of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and the country's industry leader.

Little doses

The little doses translate into big bucks though. Filipinos are the world's biggest users of telephone text messaging, and the country's 22 million mobile users—more than a quarter of the population—send an average of seven messages each every day.

Nearly 95 percent of mobile phone users are "pre-paid" customers, which means they buy airtime through top-up cards, rather than through a "post-paid" monthly bill.

In May last year, Smart launched Smart Load, which allows pre-paid customers to top up their credit over the air by short message service (SMS) instead of with top-up cards.

Smart retailers buy a special SIM card (Subscriber Identity Module, the tiny chip inside a GSM phone) that lets them transfer "load" to other users by sending an SMS message.

Unlike the top-up cards which, because of production and distribution costs, sell for at least P300 per unit, the over-the-air top-ups go for as little as P30.

Ten million of Smart's 13 million customers use Smart Load and Smart now has a network of more than 400,000 agents. Many of them are grocers, students, housewives and taxi drivers.

The start-up cost for an agent is minimal—a special SIM card at P100 and an initial load of P300. Agents get a 15-percent commission, or P15 per P100 worth of load.

Best marketing

Smart Load won the prize for best consumer service at the GSM Association meeting in Cannes in February and Trendwatching.com lists it as one of the world's best sachet marketing initiatives.

Last December, Smart launched "Pasa Load" system, which allows Smart customers to transfer airtime to one another in units as small as P10, at a cost of one peso for the sender.

It has become a hit among youngsters, who use it to get airtime from friends much in the way one would bum a cigarette.

"It's great when you're out of load and you have no money to buy a top-up," said Ocampo, 23.

It's even greater for the Philippine telecom operators.

PLDT has seen its stock rise 197 percent in the past 12 months, making it Asia's second-best and the world's third-best performing telecom stock in the MSCI telecommunications index.

Globe Telecom Inc., the Philippines' second-largest mobile operator, is catching up with the market leader and now offers similar services with its AutoLoad and Share-a-Load.

The new services have made both stocks the darlings of Asian telecom analysts, who say their main benefit is cost reduction.

"They have one of the highest margins among Third World telcos," said Edser Trinidad at BNP Paribas Peregrine in Manila. *Reuters*

Activist priest recalls running days in book

From page A1

"semi-homilies," personal essays, vignettes and letters to newspaper editors, plus other commentaries that he composed between parish work and cause-driven marathons.

The book allows the reader to catch up with the fleet-footed Reyes, who has turned the streets into a pulpit to advance advocacies that "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

Cross-country run

He went on his first public run in 1995, going cross-country for "Peace in Mindanao, Ecology in the Visayas, and Freedom in Luzon." By his own admission, the campaign was "outlandish." Still, it earned the blessing of then Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin.

Reyes has since initiated, or lent his media-grabbing persona to, various movements for, among others, social justice, moral governance and environmental protection.

The book's opening section describes the discipline and bliss he has discovered in running since entering the San Jose Jesuit Seminary in Novaliches at age 15.

"Running (for me) removes not only fats and toxins from the body, but also impure, dirty, and uncharitable thoughts," he told the INQUIRER during the book launch at the Bulwagang Claret in UP Village, Quezon City.

"Early on, I realized that a priest's life is hard. Without discipline and fitness, one easily loses perspective. When I'm forced to skip running for days, I feel lethargic, my output seems to go down, and I become irritable."

Reyes explained that he originally made running central to his daily routine upon the advice of his doctor who helped him recover from tuberculosis in the 1960s.

In the book, he writes: "Many chide me for running too much. But it's really my spirit stretching itself beyond the prison of resignation and despair. No, the situation is not hopeless. We are not at the dead-end of a tunnel but merely in the middle of a confusing maze."

Angry at system

An activist since the years of the Marcos dictatorship, Reyes confided that he ran to express his "anger" with the system, and that he carried the "frustrations and vengefulness" of its victims.

Other essays in the book include his take on the current challenges faced by priests amid sex scandals in the church, and the role of the Catholic Church in the uplift of the poor.

Reyes conceded that some fellow clerics might not agree with his views on such issues as the death penalty—since "many in the Church are actually for it"—and accepting donations from businessmen of questionable reputation.

One of the more provocative pieces is not written by Reyes but by his 80-year-old father Carlos. In a letter greeting his son who was turning 48, the elder Reyes recounts how, during the 1998 election season, a presidential candidate sent checks worth P50,000 each to parishes around Metro Manila. "You returned yours to Cardinal Sin, who, in turn, gave it to Caritas while all (the other) priests accepted."

Reyes expounded at the launch: "In many ways, the Church is not careful, and our lives as priests and bishops are sometimes compromised because of our financial needs. One shortcut (for meeting those needs) has been to seek donations from the rich."

Church donors

He recalled that in his December 2001 campaign dubbed "Wala sa Mall ang Sanggol (The Holy Child is not in the Mall)," he spoke against the commercialization of Christmas in shopping malls owned by big businessmen who happen to be major donors of the Catholic Church.

"That's why I also have a problem with (Holy) Mass being held in malls," he said. "People who go to malls appreciate the fact that Mass will be said there, but they attend as an afterthought, when they're done shopping. The mall ups it's commercial draw with a spiritual commodity."

The book also discusses women (there's a piece on Kris Aquino), the "macho" culture, and his "friction" with Malacañang when he joined a hunger strike against Bt corn and globalization. But much of the material is the result of Reyes' encounters with NGO workers and parishioners.

Unlike the long distances conquered by the intrepid priest's battered soles, "Running Peace" is made up of short, easy-reading selections edited by Chit Estella of the defunct Pinoy Times. In it, Reyes thanks the late fictionist and National Artist NVM Gonzales for encouraging him to put down his thoughts on paper. "This is not a spiritual book" of the kind that quotes Scripture or goes into lofty theological discourse, the author said.

'Run for your life!'

INQUIRER founding chair Eugenia D. Apostol wrote the foreword, and award-winning INQUIRER cartoonist Jess Abrera spiced up the pages with witty illustrations.

"Here comes Father Robert; run for your life!" Apostol said at the launch. "He'll either remind you of items in your historical past or tell you to stop throwing garbage in the wrong place, or nudge you to start bonding with your neighbor."

Twenty-two years into priesthood, Reyes currently serves at the Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish in Project 4, Quezon City. He moved to this community a year ago, after seven years at the Parish of the Holy Sacrifice at the University of the Philippines.

He jogs for up to two hours each day when he prepares for a campaign. Often running incognito, he said it was not unusual for him to be chased by dogs or thrown taunting looks by drunks who don't recognize him.

"Children think I'm just another boxer or *karatista* in training, so they start shadow boxing or doing kung fu moves when they see me approaching," he said, smiling.

Among the people who do recognize him are loyalists of deposed President Joseph Estrada, one of the major targets of his past protest actions. Luckily, he said, all that he gets from them are cuss words.

It's not this kind of harassment that he has dodged most deftly, though, but the appealing prospect of slowing down in his sometimes lonely crusades so he can "get ahead" in rank and comfort.

"I'm just as vulnerable as anyone else, whether a priest or a married man, to weakness and temptation," Reyes said. "But perhaps running has kept me on track and focused on the right things."

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Date/Time/Day	Lecturer	Subject/MCLE Credit Units (CU)
May 3, 2004 8:00 – 10:00 AM (Monday)	**Atty. Romulo Makalintal** *Election Law Practitioner*	Canvassing, Pre-Proclamation Controversies, Petition for Disqualification and Petition for Denial of Due Course of the Certificate of Candidacy (2 CU)
May 3, 2004 10:15 - 12:15 PM (Monday)	**Atty. Sixto Brillantes** *Election Law Practitioner*	Election Protest, Quo Warranto Proceedings in Election Cases, Election Offenses and Prohibited Acts during Election Period (2 CU)
May 3, 2004 1:00 - 3:00 PM (Monday)	**Justice Regalado E. Maambong** *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Updates & Recent Decisions in Election Laws & Cases (2 CU)
May 3, 2004 3:15- 5:15 PM (Monday)	**Justice Regalado E. Maambong** *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Winning the Legal Battle in the 2004 Elections (2 CU)

Date/Day/Time: **May 3, 2004, Monday, from 8:00 AM to 5:15 PM**

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PNB robbed of P5 million during Holy Week break

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

TAKING advantage of the Holy Week break and an open window, thieves fled with about P5.4 million from a Philippine National Bank cash center in Quezon City.

Two vaults

The theft was discovered yesterday morning, when the bank's cashier dropped by the PNB Quezon City Elliptical Road branch.

Cashier Mercedes Pineda found one of the two vaults on the second floor forcibly opened.

According to investigators, the bank had been closed since about 4:30 p.m., Wednesday.

The last two bank personnel who left the bank admitted to the police they forgot to close the glass window in the building's second floor.

The theft also went unnoticed by the bank's two security guards and the guard of the nearby National Housing Authority (NHA) compound.

Investigators said the thieves first cut the cyclone wire fence of the NHA compound behind the bank.

Once inside the compound, the thieves climbed a wall and went up to the bank's second floor.

Open window

They opened a glass window at the right portion of the building and sawed off the iron grills.

After entering the bank, the thieves then forcibly opened the cash vault using a steel bar.

Police believe the glass window where the thieves entered was the same window the bank personnel forgot to close. While the iron grills had been cut, the glass window remained intact.

The thieves also attempted to open the second vault but failed because it had time delay locks, PO1 Joel Gagaza of the Central Police District Investigation Unit told the INQUIRER.

Aside from the steel bar, police also found a steel bar, steel saw and a nylon cord, which were believed left behind by the thieves.

COUNTING HER EGGS
A girl gathers the eggs she collected during an Easter hunt at the Western Police District headquarters in Manila. ERIK ARAZAS

KNP bet hits creation of Muslim task force

A MUSLIM senatorial candidate running under the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino yesterday criticized the creation of the Salaam police task force, which she said would only pit Muslims against Muslims.

"How then can we feel safe with the creation of this Salaam task force when we know for a fact that it is just another tactic of the government to divide us and to pit our own brothers against us?" said Amina Rasul, daughter of former Sen. Santanina Rasul.

President Macapagal-Arroyo announced the formation of the police team composed of Muslims in a bid to appease Muslim leaders who held a protest vigil at the Quezon City Circle.

The leaders denounced alleged abuses committed by lawmen pursuing extremists.

Ms Macapagal said the Salaam (peace) task force would be on top of all operations involving Muslims.

Rasul criticized Macapagal's move as Professor Yusuf Ledesma, a Muslim teacher in Quezon City, told Rasul that some policemen claiming to be Muslims were among those who raided the Islamic center in Quezon City two weeks ago.

Though Rasul said anti-terror drives are very laudable, she was quick to add that these efforts would only be effective if it protects the innocent and respects human rights.

Muntinlupa traders frown

BUSINESSMEN in Muntinlupa City are unhappy.

First, they frowned over the implementation of a new revenue code that raised business taxes by 400 percent.

Now, they are anxious over the promise of the local government to refund the excess taxes paid after the city scrapped the tax hike.

Opposition Councilor Aldrin San Pedro said the revised revenue code was implemented in January 2003 but was repealed three months later.

For 63 companies, the withdrawal of the law was too late since they already paid business taxes for the entire year.

Burdensome

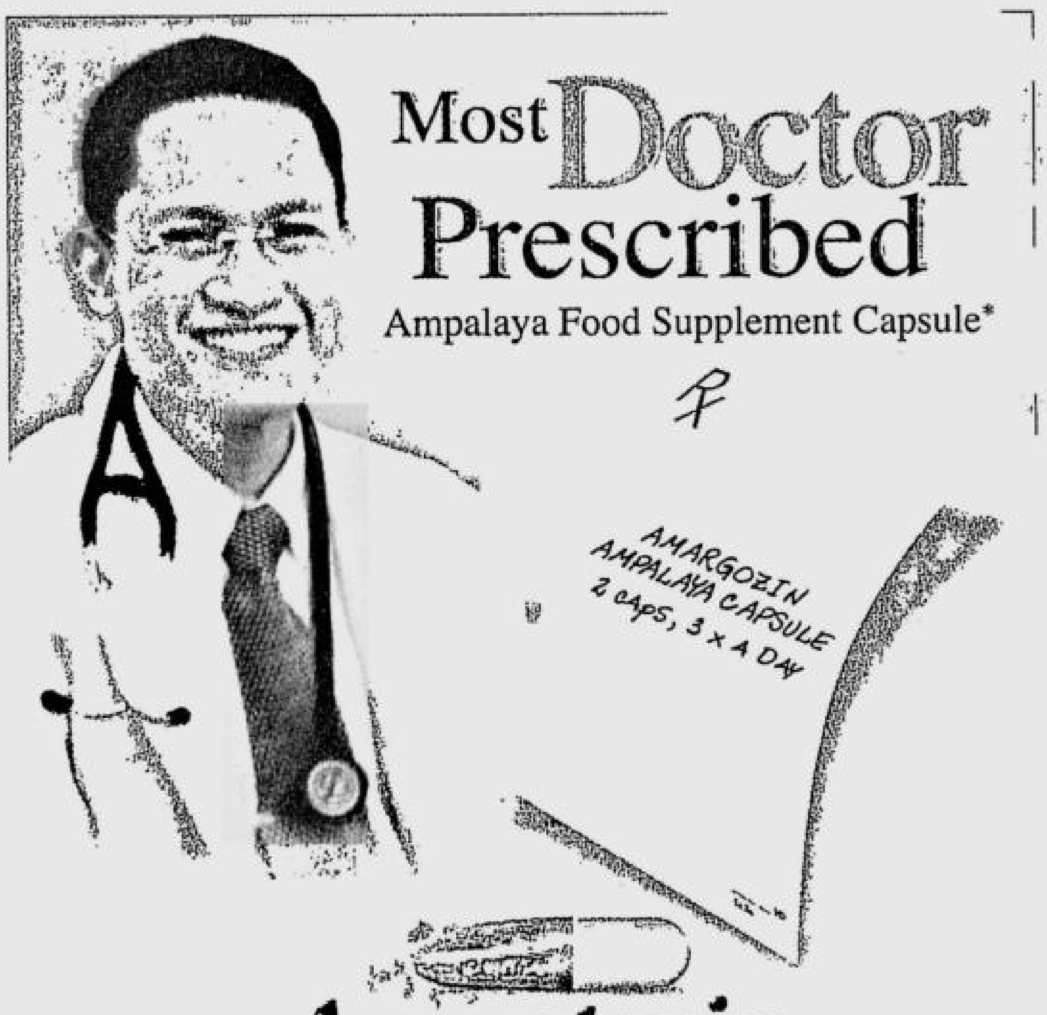
According to San Pedro, who authored the original measure to revise the local tax code, a big company in Muntinlupa used to pay only about P16 million annually. After the implementation of the revenue code, it grew to P68 million.

He said the city council passed a law that was different from his proposal and burdensome to investors.

A businessman said the city promised to give tax credits to affected businesses but no clear guidelines had been set.

But Mayor Jaime Fresnedi dismissed the issue as mere political maneuvering.

"Why would they raise this issue now when it took place in 2002?" the mayor said, stressing that San Pedro was running for vice mayor under the opposition party. *Margaux Ortiz*



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Date/Time	Subject Classification/ MCLE Credit Units (CU)	Lecturer	Subject
May 15, 2004 8:00 -10:00 am	Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy (2 CU)	Justice Magdangal M. De Leon *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Oral Advocacy
May 15, 2004 10:15 –12:15 pm	International Law (2 CU)	Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma *Head, Board of Special Inquiry, BI*	International Law and the Admission of Aliens
May 15, 2004 1:00 – 3:00 pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws& Jurisprudence (2CU)	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta *Associate Justice, Sandiganbayan*	Updates in Criminal Law
May 15, 2004 3:15 – 6:15 pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws & Jurisprudence (3 CU)	Justice Regalado E. Maambong *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Updates in Constitutional Law and Election Law
May 22, 2004 8:00 –10:00 am	Updates in Substantive & Procedural laws & Jurisprudence (2 CU)	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan *Former Dean, UP College of Law*	Updates in Labor Law
May 22, 2004 10:15-12:15 pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2CU)	Justice Noel G. Tijam *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Pre-Trial Skills: Civil & Criminal Cases
May 22, 2004 1:00 - 3:00 pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2CU)	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval *Associate Justice, Sandiganbayan*	Trial Technique: The Art of Direct & Cross Examination
May 22, 2004 3:15 - 6:15 pm	Alternative Dispute Resolution (3 CU)	Prof. Mario E. Valderrama *Commercial Arbitrator*	Alternative Dispute Resolution
May 29, 2004 8:00 – 10:00 am	Alternative Dispute Resolution (2 CU)	Dean Custodio O. Parlade *Commercial Arbitrator*	International & Domestic Arbitration
May 29, 2004 10:15 - 12:15 pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Environmental Law (2 CU)	Atty. Antonio Oposa * *IBP Chairperson – National Environmental Action Team*	Environmental Law
May 29, 2004 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	Justice Hector L. Hofileña *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals (Ret.)*	Updates in Legal Ethics
May 29, 2004 4:15 - 6:15 pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws & Jurisprudence (2 CU)	Justice Ruben T. Reyes *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Updates in Procedural Law Jurisprudence
June 5, 2004 8:00 –10:00 am	Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy (2 CU)	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez, Jr. *Associate Justice, Supreme Court (Ret.)*	Legal Writing
June 5, 2004 10:15 – 12:15 pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Law and Economics (2 CU)	Prof. Harry Roque, Jr. *UP - College of Law*	Law and Economics
June 5, 2004 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	Justice Ruben T. Reyes *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Problem Areas in Legal Ethics
June 5, 2004 4:15 – 6:15 pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Law & Technology (2 CU)	Justice Regalado E. Maambong *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Essentials of Forensic Ballistics, Questioned Documents & Fingerprinting
TOTAL	36		

Date/Day/Time: May 15, 22, 29 and June 05, 2004, Saturday, from 8:00 am to 6:15 pm
Venue: Ballroom, Valle Verde Country Club (*beside PSC Complex [formerly ULTRA]*)
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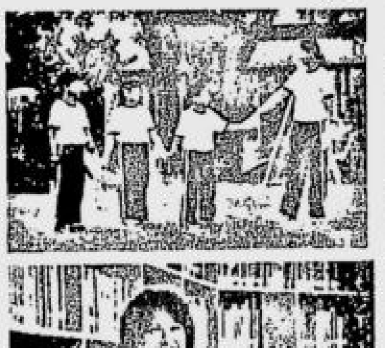

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Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

THE NIGHT sky lights up as flames gobble up the homes of 1,100 families at the Maestranza Compound in Intramuros. JEFF PASCUAL

6,600 homeless in blaze

By Tarra Quismundo

AN ESTIMATED 6,600 persons were rendered homeless when fire ravaged the depressed community at the Maestranza Compound in Intramuros, Manila, at dawn yesterday.

Two young girls suffered burns, while a 26-year-old man suffered cuts on his fingers.

Unattended house

Residents' accounts indicated that the fire started at about midnight at the house of a certain Chona Alano, who lived in the middle of the 2.86-hectare compound along Muelle del Rio, a lot that sits between the Pasig River and the Walled City.

The compound is a few meters away from the Bureau of Immigration Building, and is accessible through the Magallanes Drive near the foot of Jones Bridge.

According to Gloria Rodriguez, 42, who lived beside the house of Alano, she heard her neighbors leave at about 11 p.m., Saturday.

Alano and her daughter usually leave their house unattended at about midnight to sell snacks along Taft Avenue.

Less than an hour later, fire erupted and quickly spread outward to some 400 houses, mostly built of plywood and galvanized iron.

"It's as if gasoline was poured on our houses," Rodriguez said in Filipino.

The fire reportedly spread so fast that many of the residents failed to save any of their belongings.

Family dog and a blanket

Rodriguez, who lived in a two-story house with her husband and two sons, only saved her television set and her dog of two years, Karen.

Elena Solanga, 54, a resident of the compound for 12 years, mourned the loss of her house, and most of her belongings.

The only thing left to her and her family was a blanket and some important documents.

She related that the only set of clothes left to her were the blouse and pants she wore when she went to bed Saturday night.

"It's Easter Sunday, but it feels like Black Saturday," Solanga lamented.

Third degree burns

Queen Verly Garcia, 11, suffered third degree burns on her face and torso. She tried to hide under a wooden bed inside her house.

She is now undergoing treatment at the Philippine General Hospital Burn Unit.

Meanwhile, 7-year-old Rowena Alvarez suffered first degree burns on her left arm.

Another resident, Dennis Lopez, 26, suffered minor lacerations in his fingers.

The alarm reached Task Force Delta, which called on all Bureau of Fire Protection units in Metro Manila and volunteer firetrucks to respond.

At 6:58 a.m., the fire was put out.

Relocated

The Manila City government's social welfare department, however, estimated the affected families at 1,100, based on a census they took last year.

Of the 400 structures in the compound, only around 30 were left, with damages placed at P1.5 million.

The affected persons were initially relocated to the nearby Muelle del Rio Linear Park, where the city built tents for them.

De Venecia escort hurt in attack

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

A POLICEMAN acting as a security escort to Speaker Jose de Venecia was stabbed and wounded during an attack by a neighbor in Caloocan City Saturday afternoon.

PO2 Ronald Cleope suffered knife wounds in the face and chest, while his alleged attacker, Renato Carpio, 45, was killed.

According to the police, Cleope and Carpio had a confrontation outside the home of the De Venecia security escort in Barangay 25, Caloocan, at about 3 p.m.

Carpio had reportedly built a chicken coop in front of Cleope's house and the policeman wanted his neighbor to relocate it.

Drunk and angry

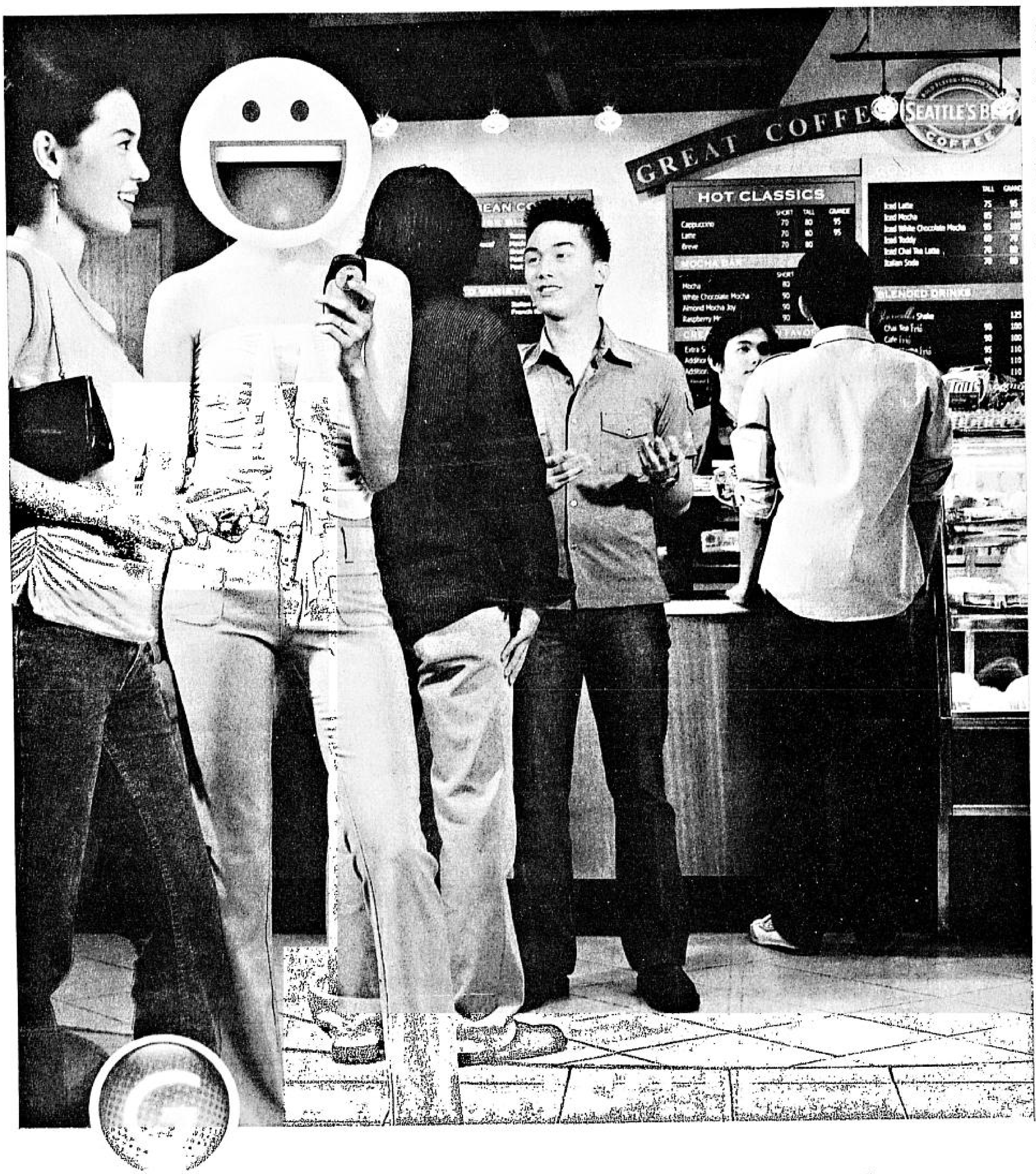
But Carpio, whom police said was drunk, got angry and allegedly pulled out a knife.

The man then reportedly started swinging at Cleope with the knife, hitting the lawman in the face and chest.

Though bleeding, Cleope fought back and managed to draw his .45-caliber service pistol. He repeatedly shot Carpio, who was hit thrice.

Relatives brought Carpio to the Diosdado Macapagal Memorial Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

Cleope surrendered to barangay officials.



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Anong meron sa 'Pinas na wala sa ibang bansa?

Aba, marami! Ang sagot nina international ad executive David Guerrero, environmentalist and publisher Lory Tan, Youngblood contributor Sara Zoe Sangco, at INQUIRER columnist Michael Tan. Mamayang alas-10 ng gabi, sa ABC. (May replay bukas, alas-8 ng umaga.)

ABC

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

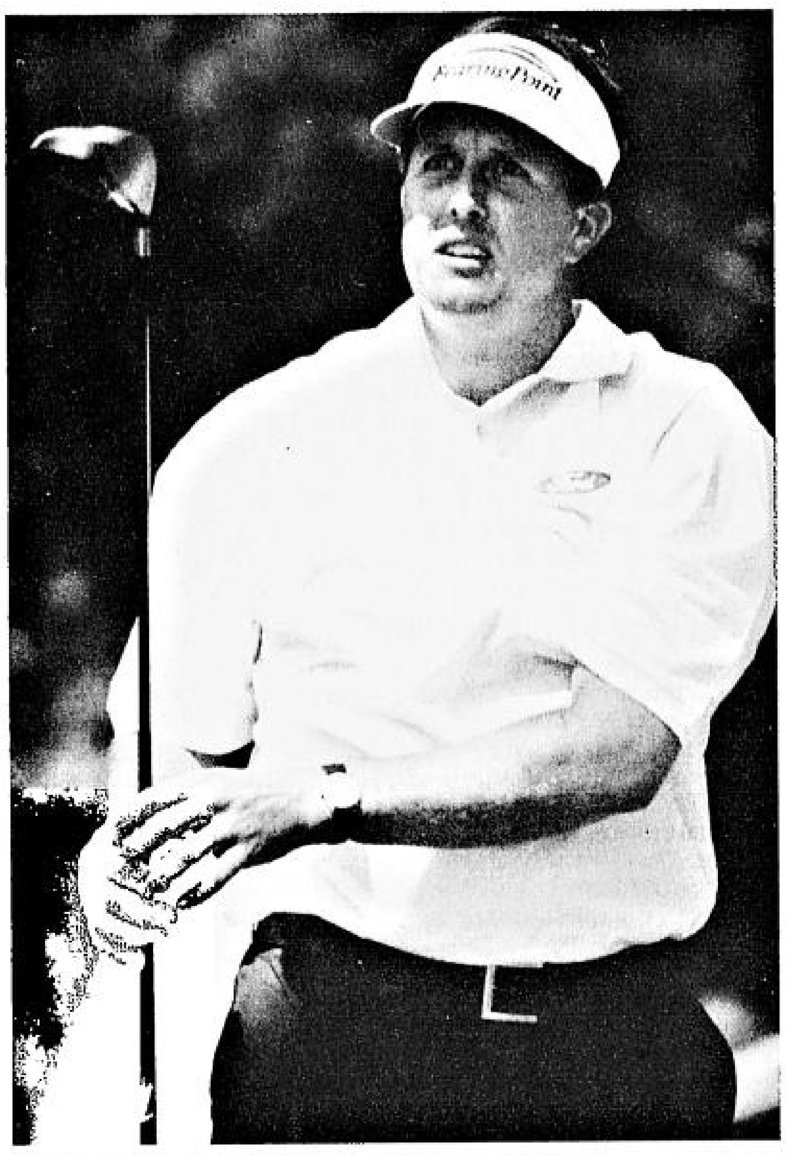
SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

GOLF: 2004 Masters-Final Round Preview; 12 noon and 7 p.m. (r); Final Round; 12:30 p.m.; 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. (r); Final Round Highlights; 5 p.m. (r-midnight) Star Sports—The year's first major winds down to the final 18 holes.

BASKETBALL: NBA-Spurs vs Clippers; 9:30 a.m. (r-10 p.m.); Solar Sports; Lakers vs Kings; 8 p.m.; IBC 13— San Antonio gears up for the playoffs against LA's other team while expect another battle royale between bitter rivals LA and Sacramento for the Pacific crown.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.



MICKELSON watches his drive on the second hole. REUTERS

68TH MASTERS

Mickelson set to get monkey off his back

AUGUSTA, Georgia—The guy with no majors suddenly has no worries.

Phil Mickelson no longer wonders where his tee shots are going. He no longer feels as though he has to fire at every flag in a reckless pursuit of greatness. And he doesn't have to chase Tiger Woods, or anyone else, for that elusive major.

Lefty is in control of his game and in control of his own destiny.

"I'm much more at ease than I have been in the past," Mickelson said. "I don't have that anxiety. I haven't felt it all year."

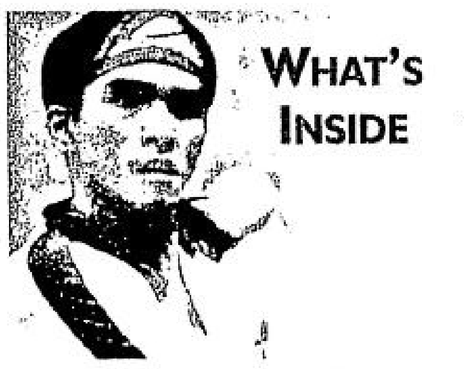
Mickelson polished off a bogey-free round Saturday at the Masters with a 10-foot par save on the final hole, giving him a 3-under 69, a share of the lead with Chris DiMarco and his best chance yet to shed the label as the best player never to have won a major.

Despite a half-dozen close calls in the majors, he has never gone into the final round with no one ahead of him.

Better yet, the last 13 winners at Augusta National have come out of the final group.

Someone was quick to point out

MICKELSON/ A26



WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Tierro caps RP's 4-1 rout of HK /A28
■ Bryans lift US netters to 2-1 lead /A29

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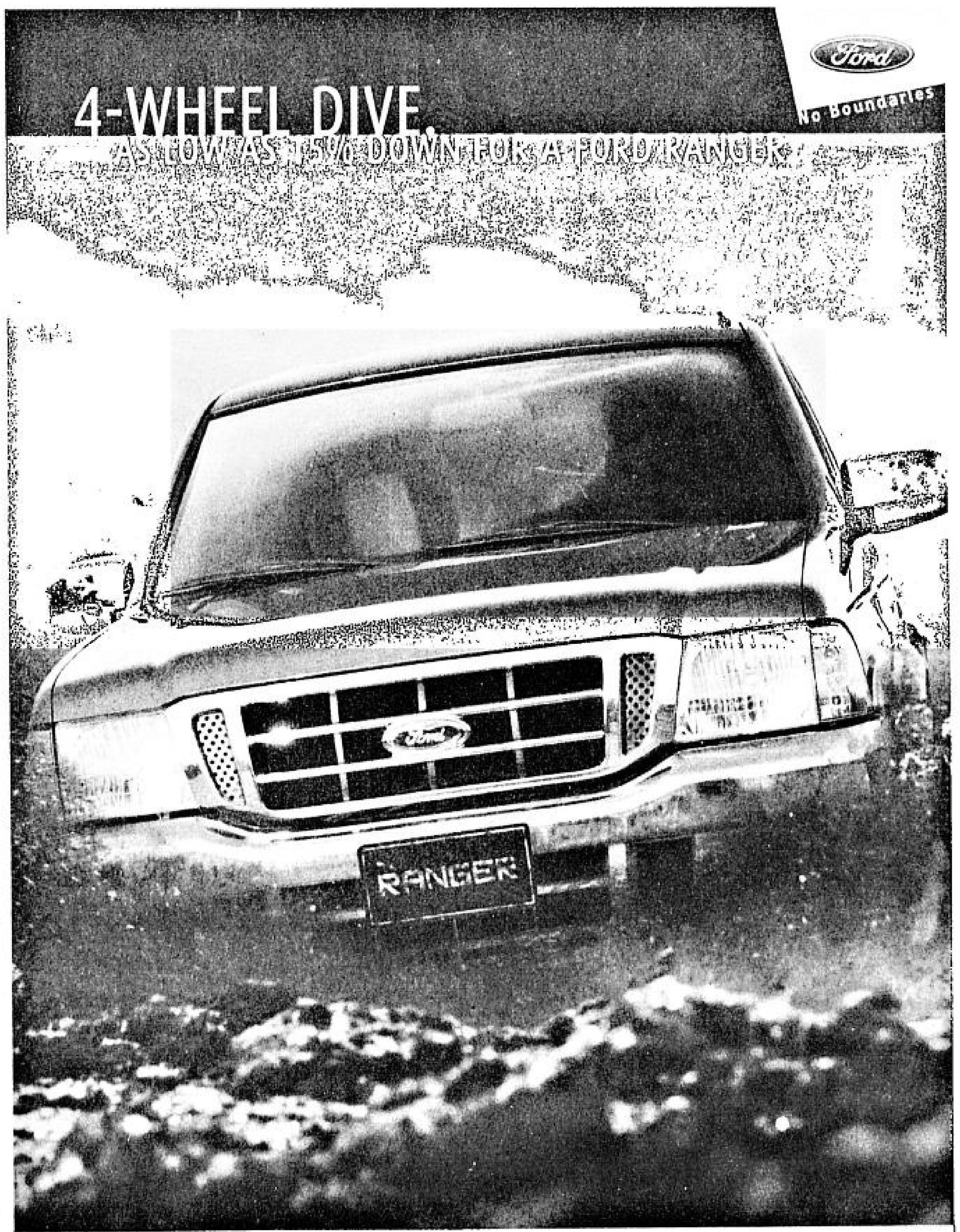

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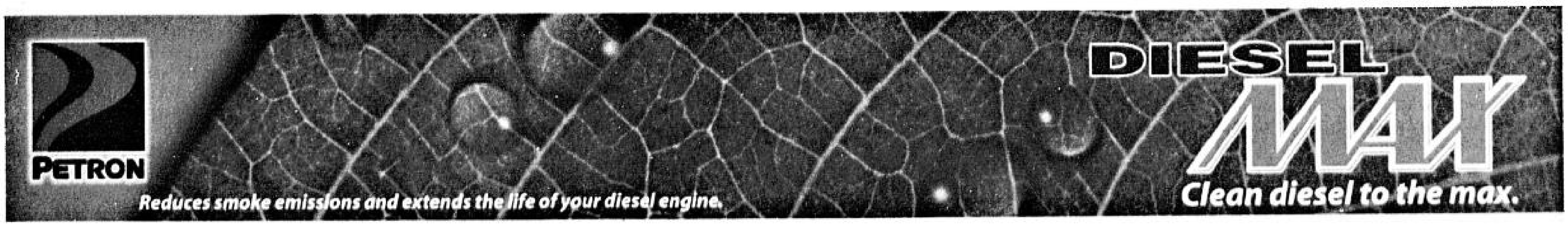

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Marquez steps up fight buildup

WORLD Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation champion Juan Manuel "Dinamita" Marquez will have two unbeaten sparmates in his camp as he steps up his buildup for his May 8 title defense against universal featherweight king Manny Pacquiao at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Marquez (42-2, 33 KOs) is running through several sparmates at the Romanza Gym in Mexico City where he works under trainer Ignacio "Nacho" Beristain, and reports said the Mexican ring hero is "feeling strong" for his upcoming showdown with Pacquiao (38-2-1, 30 KOs).

Americans Steven Luevano and Daniel Mitchell, both undefeated prospects of Top Rank boss Bob Arum, have been commissioned to assist Marquez in his preparation for the conqueror of Mexican great Marco Antonio Barrera.

The 23-year-old Californian Luevano, a junior lightweight who is unscathed in 22 fights with 10 KOs, arrived in Mexico the other day accompanied by the southpaw Mitchell, who has a record of 4-0-1 and is described as "a young and rugged" fighter who can mimic Pacquiao's fighting style.

Arum, who promotes Marquez, is reportedly leaving no stone unturned in preparing Marquez for the biggest battle of his career to date.

Marquez has been holed up in the last several weeks at a makeshift gym in the Toluca mountains in Mexico, where he trains alongside Melchor Cob Castro who will also vie for the WBC junior fly throne very soon.

Beristain, in an interview with the Mexican press, had indicated that the Marquez-Pacquiao duel will be a "war of strategies" and predicted that his ward will come out the better technical fighter come fight night.

"I don't think Pacquiao will make true his promise of engaging Juan Manuel in a toe-to-toe exchange in the early rounds as what he has been saying in several instances," Beristain commented.

HBO will air the Pacquiao-Marquez 12-rounder, as well as the battle of young prospects between Miguel Cotto and Juan "Pollo" Valenzuela.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

Coke halts SMB win binge

COCA-COLA's Reynel Hugnatan slams into Danny Seigle of San Miguel in last night's game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By June Navarro

COCA-COLA allowed Art Long to go wild inside the paint but clamped down on San Miguel Beer's local crew last night to post a thrilling 88-85 triumph and break the longest win streak in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

But the game, already tainted by flagrant and technical fouls just a few minutes after the opening tip, ended in mayhem.

Nic Belasco of SMB shoved Coca-Cola's Mark Sanford on the way to the dugout and players and officials from both squads got involved in the melee. While cooler heads intervened and separated Belasco and Sanford, the 6-foot-5 San Miguel wingman was too temperamental to let the moment pass.

Belasco again attacked Sanford near the Coca-Cola locker room even as Coke's Bong Hawkins was slammed by Long onto the metal railings. The ruckus ended when officials from both sister firms again intervened.

"They (Beermen) were due for a loss. But I must admit they are still the best team in the league," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes, whose Tigers moved into a triple tie with idle Alaska and Talk 'N Text at second place (6-3).

Long proved unstoppable in the shaded lane, scoring 39 points and hauling down 30 rebounds.

But the Tigers didn't panic, followed their game plan to the letter and avenged an earlier 27-point loss to the Beermen, who went down for the first time in nine games.

In the nightcap, Vergel Meneses scored five of the last six points of FedEx and the Express gave new coach Joe Lipa his first win in two games with a 103-100 decision over the Red Bull Barakos.

FedEx improved to 3-6 while Red Bull fell to 4-4.

"We knew Art Long will go wild but if we could contain their locals, we knew we have a chance to beat them and that's what exactly happened," said Reyes.

The Tigers, who led by as much as 16 points in the first half, stood their ground in the last quarter with Poch Juinio smothering a Danny Ildefonso undergoal attempt that preserved Coca-Cola's victory with 6.9 ticks to go.

The scores:

First Game

COCA-COLA 88—Sanford 23, Juinio 13, Abarrientos 13, Cariaso 13, Hugnatan 12, Hawkins 6, Morano 6, Reavis 2, Avenido 0, Lao 0, Wainwright 0.

SAN MIGUEL 85—Long 39, Pena 13, Racela 9, Seigle 8, Ildefonso 8, Belasco 6, Hontiveros 2, Singson 0.

Quarters: 27-17, 43-32, 68-58, 88-85

Second Game

FEDEX 103—Maddox 28, Ritualo 16, Billones 14, Meneses 13, Yap 10, Ferriols 8, De Ocampo 7, Arboleda 3, Gonzales 2, Rodriguez 2, Pingris 0, Ejercito 0.

RED BULL 100—Pennisi 18, Villanueva 17, Collins 14, Harp 13, Tugade 10, Valenzuela 10, Robinson 7, Bagulo 4, Se 4, Lopez 3, Ordonio 0, Asaytono 0.

Quarters: 23-31, 55-57, 83-74, 103-100

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:45 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Shell
7:10 p.m.—Purefoods vs Red Bull Barako

Small-town Christ did not make it to first base

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

HE indeed looked a bit like the Christ. But that did not help.

Maybe it was his beard and the tall foreigner's nose.

He also had calm, searching eyes.

Donald Rexford Jr. did appear fit to star in the annual Good Friday town crucifixion.

But more than his slight resemblance to the Christ, Rexford never hid the real reason why he had himself nailed to the cross a total of six times.

He had wanted to see his American father.

***

This was in the 80s.

Approximately in the summer of '85, Malaya published an article "Christ calling America" illustrated with a photo of a bare-chested, grimacing Rexford being nailed to the cross.

His call, with the help of international media, did reach his father at his home somewhere in Texas.

For a while, the sad story had seemed headed for a happy ending.

The bet was that, just like the Christ, Rexford would be revived then renewed in a reunion with his father.

***

Sorry, but Donald Rexford Jr., did not have the luck.

He had had a chance to talk to his ailing father on the phone.

Maybe Rex, who never attended school, tried to mumble a few borrowed words, incongruities, on the phone.

But that was all.

He never reached even first base, so to say, in his lifetime bid to reach the home of his father.

It was never fully explained how and why he got struck out.

But they were saying that, even if his father had offered to take him in, the unschooled Rex would have never fitted into the complicated American system.

***

So what happened to the luckless son of an American serviceman?

Nothing much. He just ended up agonizing day after day on the cruel road.

He worked as a pedicab driver.

Rex preferred to transport passengers deep into the night until the wee hours of the morning, the so-called graveyard shift.

He covered the Boni Ave. edge down to the inner streets in Hulo and Vergara in Mandaluyong.

He was also often hungry. But he later craved more for cheap gin, obviously to soothe an inexplicable inner ache.

***

He married but predictably got separated.

A small house, donated by a town politician, was later sold by a brother-in-law.

Rex moved in with a step-brother in the crowded Saniboy area.

He was often haggard, unkempt. His hair and beard had grown gray.

But as Good Friday would approach, he would be at his best, he would have his hair dyed, to re-enact the crucifixion before a sweltering Good Friday crowd inside the dusty Welfareville compound in Mandaluyong.

The original vow was only for three crucifixions.

Once would have actually been enough to send the message across.

But who knows? Maybe he agreed to extend his crucifixion to a total of six Good Fridays because Rexford, who obviously never had a toy of his own in childhood, could not recite even a single complete prayer.

***

Anyway, since he had skipped the gory Good Friday act, at least a couple of penitents had taken over the role from Rexford.

Right after him, Pedrong Kargador assumed the painful, bloody role that required thin, stainless nails to be driven through the penitent's palms.

Last Good Friday, a nameless, dusky worker was crucified at the riverside edge Saniboy basketball court, no longer at the Welfareville compound, scene of Donald Rexford's momentary stardom.

Before Rex, the first fellow known to have been crucified around Mandaluyong was Reneng Gulay, a toughie who later got butchered in a basketball court in Bagong Silang, off Shaw Blvd., in the late 60s.

Erning Elepante took over, died, and was substituted by another fellow, before Rexford decided it was his turn.

***

The good thing about Donald Rexford was that, since he had himself crucified, the Good Friday crucifixion became a Lenten main event that never failed to draw the big crowd in his place.

But would you believe that nobody in the curious crowd seemed to remember how Rexford had unknowingly lent color, class and drama to the town crucifixion?

Last week, as Good Friday approached, your reporter visited Rex's step-brother to inquire. It had been a long time since we last drank gin with Rex.

Sorry, we were told, Rexford had died of intestinal cancer in Balingao, Santa Barbara, Pangasinan last month, obviously a result of excessive alcohol intake.

Rex was buried in his mother's birthplace in Santa Barbara.

This insignificant tale is being told to report that Rexford at least had his second wish, to be near his loving mother again, fulfilled.

He failed in his bid to see his father, his right, but it cannot be said that he did not try.

In fact, Donald Rexford Jr., 53, did it a total of six times, in a strange, unbearable way.

Please say a prayer for this poor, lost friend to finally find his way to the home of the True Father.

SPORTSWATCH

Liberica golf slated at Mt. Malarayat

THE MT. MALARAYAT Golf and Country Club in Lipa City will be the venue of the 4th Liberica Golf Invitational Tournament from April 17-18. The tournament is named after a coffee variety Liberica, which is commonly known as "barako," the coffee that Batangas is famous for. Mt. Malarayat named its major club tournament after the industry that made Lipa a prosperous municipality in the 1800s as well as a world center of coffee trade. The Liberica Golf Invitational is open to Mt. Malarayat Golf & Country Club members, spouses and dependents 16 years old and above. A minimum of 102 teams will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. A Toyota Altis goes to the lucky golfer who swings a Hole-in-One. For inquiries, call the Mt. Malarayat Golf & Country Club at (043) 756-7006 or the Pro Shop at (043) 756-7007.

Checkmate visits north, central Luzon

MILO Checkmate goes to Region 1 and 3 today for a series of five-day provincial summer chess classes. The clinics in Region 1 will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Nepo Mall, Dagupan City and at the Divine Word College (Auditorium) in Vigan. In Region 3, the chess lessons will be conducted from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Garden Angels Integrated School at Sta. Cruz Village, Burol 1, Balagtas, Bulacan and from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Colegio de Sta. Philomena in Pulilan. Clinics will also be held from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Araullo University in Cabanatuan City and from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Central Luzon University in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija. In Metro Manila, two sets of special classes will be conducted from April 12-16 and from April 17-24. For inquiries, call 826-8560 and 0916-852-1069.

Prince launches summer tennis clinics

THE 2004 Prince Summer Tennis Clinics kicked off recently in various sports centers across the country. Starting tomorrow, another clinic will start at the New Rizal Sports Complex on Shaw Boulevard, Pasig, according to clinic organizer Asian Sports Management Inc. and sponsor Prince Rackets. The Pasig clinic, to be supervised by expert instructors, will end on May 11. Other clinics will be held at the St. Francis tennis court in Cainta, Rizal from today to May 10), Valle Verde Country Club from tomorrow to May 27 and at the Makati Sports Club from today. A Prince clinic being held at the UST Tennis Courts will end on May 23. For inquiries, call Khristine Abigan at 671-9765 or 671-1540.

Bakbakan Open kicks off today

TOPNOTCH action featuring the finest fighters of the country's leading gamefowl breeders is expected in the "Bakbakan Open National 8-Cock Derby" which fires off today at Roligon Mega Cockpit. The six-day 80-fight program, sponsored by Asvet, Vitarich Panabong and Thunderbird Platinum, is also scheduled on April 14, 16, 19, 21 and 23 and gathers more than 350 participants representing 17 gamefowl breeders groups belonging to the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders (NFGB). The entry fee is P15,000 and the minimum guaranteed prize P3 million. For inquiries, call Roligon at 833-2275, 833-1638, 852-9774 and 852-9812.

Mendoza continues winning ways

BUSINESSMAN Arthur Mendoza of Agoncillo, Batangas continued his winning ways in Luzon derbies last Wednesday by running away with another championship at the Van-Eric Cockpit Arena in Macabebe, Pampanga. Mendoza's entry Lance 5 (combined with Danny Espinosa) won its first match, drew the second and swept its third and fourth opponents to tally 3.5 points, enough to outclass 44 other equally tough entries. Mendoza and his farm manager Bert Martinez produce some 300 stags a year in his Golden Warrior Farm. Meanwhile, everything is set for the Special 5-Cock Derby of Ka Luding Boongaling and Romano Castillo at the Dr. Ceferino Emralino Coliseum in Candelaria, Quezon on April 27. Entry fee is P22,000 and the format is open betting. For inquiries, call Ambet Asinas at 0916-2175601.

Ucap, NCA big guns in Big Dome derby

PROMINENT members of United Cockers Association of the Philippines (Ucap) and National Cockers Association (NCA) are vying in a big 7-cock derby on Tuesday and Thursday at the Araneta Coliseum. Derby hosts are Ucap president Raymond Velayo and hotelier-sportsman Biboy Enriquez, the duo whose previous derby promotions lured an average of at least 40 entries. Submission of weights is today, from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m., at the Big Dome's green gate. For inquiries, call 911-3101 and 911-2928 and look for Gloria Avena. With more than 60 fights on tap, the 3-cock elimination round starts at 4 p.m. tomorrow. Qualifiers will advance to the 4-cock finals on Thursday.

CHRIS' NEW HOME

CRIS Bolado (middle), once among the Philippine Basketball Association's finest centers, has found a home in the San Miguel All Stars that now regularly shares the limelight in the pro league's provincial games. The All Stars are scheduled to play this Thursday in Zamboanga City, prior to the game pitting the Coca-Cola Tigers and Sta. Lucia Realtors.

Mickelson set to get monkey off his back

From page A25

that Mickelson doesn't have to worry about Woods, who stumbled to a 75 and was nine shots behind. How does that feel?

"Well, it doesn't suck, I'll say that," Mickelson said.

Mickelson and DiMarco, who was equally flawless in a bogey-free round of 68, were at 6-under 210 heading to a Sunday that should be filled with thrills.

"He's going to have a lot of pressure on him, too, because he's going to try to get that monkey off there," DiMarco said. "It's going to be fun."

England's Paul Casey shot a 68 and was at 4-under 212, swapping roles with countryman Justin Rose, who matched the worst third round at the Masters by a 36-hole leader. Rose bogeyed five of his first seven holes and crashed to an 81, the same score Lee Trevino shot in 1989.

Three-time major winner Ernie Els (71) and two-time Masters champion Bernhard Langer (69) were another stroke back, along with K.J. Choi (72).

Els was lucky to salvage a bogey after driving into the trees on No. 11 and turning a birdie opportunity into a bogey on the par-5 13th. He desperately wants a green jacket, having finished no worse than sixth the last four years.

"I've been in this position quite a few times, but I've been chasing Tiger," Els said.

That won't be the case Sunday. Woods fell behind from the start, then tumbled out with a double bogey on the par-5 13th. Two birdies on his final four holes spared him his worst score at the Masters.

"I put myself pretty far back going into tomorrow," Woods said. "If I can get it to even par or under par going into the back nine, I'm right in the ball game. Anything can happen on the back nine here."

The attention will be on Mickelson, a supremely talented player with 22 victories on the PGA Tour. Only two other players—Harry "Lighthorse" Cooper and MacDonald Smith—have won more often without capturing the four tournaments that matter the most.

Mickelson was close at Pinehurst five years ago in the US Open until Payne Stewart made a 15-foot par putt on the final hole to beat him by one. He was close in Atlanta at the 2001 PGA until David Toms beat him with a par on the final hole.

This will be the seventh time he goes into the final round at a major within two shots of the lead.

Mickelson's 0-for-42 in the majors has defined his career. AP

Indonesians pull out of Seaba caging

DESPITE the last-minute pullout of Indonesia, the 4th Southeast Asia Junior Basketball Championship will go on as scheduled at the Quezon Convention Center in Lucena City, Quezon, on April 14.

BAP secretary general Graham Lim said Indonesia's withdrawal from the weeklong competition will hardly affect the quality of the competition since defending champion Malaysia is still around, while Thailand and Singapore are expected to send strong teams.

"We'll push through with the tournament. It would have been nice if the Indonesians were here, *pero hindi naman sila ang mahigpit na kalaban natin* (but they are not our top rivals)," said Lim.

The Philippine team, made up of top juniors from the country's topnotch college leagues, is raring to wrest the title from Malaysia, which won the crown last year when the event was held in Kuala Lumpur.

Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore cagers are expected to arrive within the next two days in time for the opening of the tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines and the local governments of Lucena City and the province of Quezon.

Expected to grace the brief but meaningful opening rites are Quezon Gov. Willie Enverga, Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga and BAP officials headed by its president, Quinteliano Z. Literal.

Also invited to attend the opening ceremony is Philippine Olympic Chair Robert Aventajado.

The RP Youth team, led by junior standouts Kevin Astorga, Mike Baldos, Mike Sy, Ogie Menor, JR Taganas, Jayson Castro and Mark Eubank, has just wrapped up a weeklong team-building session and a series of tune-up matches in Baguio City.

The team will be handled by coach Johnny Tam and his assistants, Ching Marcelino and Brit Reroma.

Air Force five pounds Indos Strip

AIR FORCE turned back Indos Strip, 102-99, recently to bolster its bid in the ongoing NBDL (National Basketball Development League) tournament at the UM gym.

Meanwhile, NBDL organizer Ted Magno has set a meeting among coaches and team owners at 2 p.m. on April 21 at the PSC Cafeteria inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex to discuss preparations for the Founder's Cup tournament on April 30.

Interested teams may contact Magno at (049) 568-0300 or 0919-5968978.

Astorga, Baldos head final RP-Burlington Youth lineup

HOLDOVERS Kevin Astorga and Mike Baldos head the final roster of the RP-Burlington Youth Team tasked to regain the Southeast Asia Basketball Association junior men's championship starting on Wednesday in Lucena City.

The 6-foot-3 Astorga of International School has been designated team captain and the 6-5 Baldos of Ateneo co-captain of the 18-and-under squad being mentored by Johnny Tam.

Completing the lineup are San Beda Red Cubs' Jay-R Taganas (6-3), Rogemar Menor (6-3) and James Martinez (5-9); Red Lion Martin Antonio (6-5), PCCr's Alvin Calatayud (6-0), Xavier's Mike Sy (5-9), Siena's Dilan Ababou (6-3), Adamson's Daryl Bautista (6-1), PCU's Jayson Castro (5-10) and Ateneo's Carlo Medina (5-5).

Named alternates were UST's Mark Eubank (6-1), San Beda's Eduardo Canlas (5-11) and De Ocampo's Jayson Nocom (6-3).

The starters will be Antonio, Astorga, Bautista, Castro and Martinez.

"This is a fighting team. Well-prepared and solid in every position," said Tam. "Definitely, this is stronger than the one we fielded in Malaysia."

That team, crippled by the inability of five key players to join the trip at the last minute, landed a dismal fourth in the 2002 Kuala Lumpur edition.

This time, with more schools allowing their players to join the six-month tryouts, Tam, Baldos and Astorga, who were barely 15 then, hope to redeem themselves before their countrymen.

To further boost the team's cohesion, Ruddy Tan, general manager of chief backer Burlington socks, sent the players and the coaching staff to Baguio City last week for the final phase of their training.

There, the players practiced twice a day and played tune-up games, which they all won, against Baguio Colleges Foundation, University of Baguio and a local commercial team.

Tam, also an assistant coach of FedEx Express, is assisted by Ching Marcelino, Manny Dandan, Eric King and Britt Reroma.

Joining RP-Burlington in the tournament serving as a qualifier for the Asian Basketball Confederation junior men's championship are defending champion Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

Games will be televised over IBC 13, according to Teddy Pereña of Teamsports.

The TV coverages are as follows: RP vs Malaysia (6 p.m. Wednesday), RP vs Singapore (12 midnight Thursday), RP vs Thailand (6 p.m. Friday) and final (9 p.m. Saturday).

Aside from Burlington, official socks of the PBA, the TV coverage is supported by Accel, Gran Matador, Hanford, Kitaro and the Journal Group.

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JVC holds badminton draw today

THE DRAWING of lots for the JVC Under-14 Open Badminton Championships will be held today at the Entertainment Plaza of SM Manila.

A total of 151 players are vying for top honors in various divisions in the event firing off on April 16 at the SM Megamall. Sixty-six are disputing the crown in the boys' singles and 37 in the ladies side of the event.

The boys' doubles event drew 22 teams, while the girls side lured 15. A total of 20 pairs will compete in the mixed doubles.

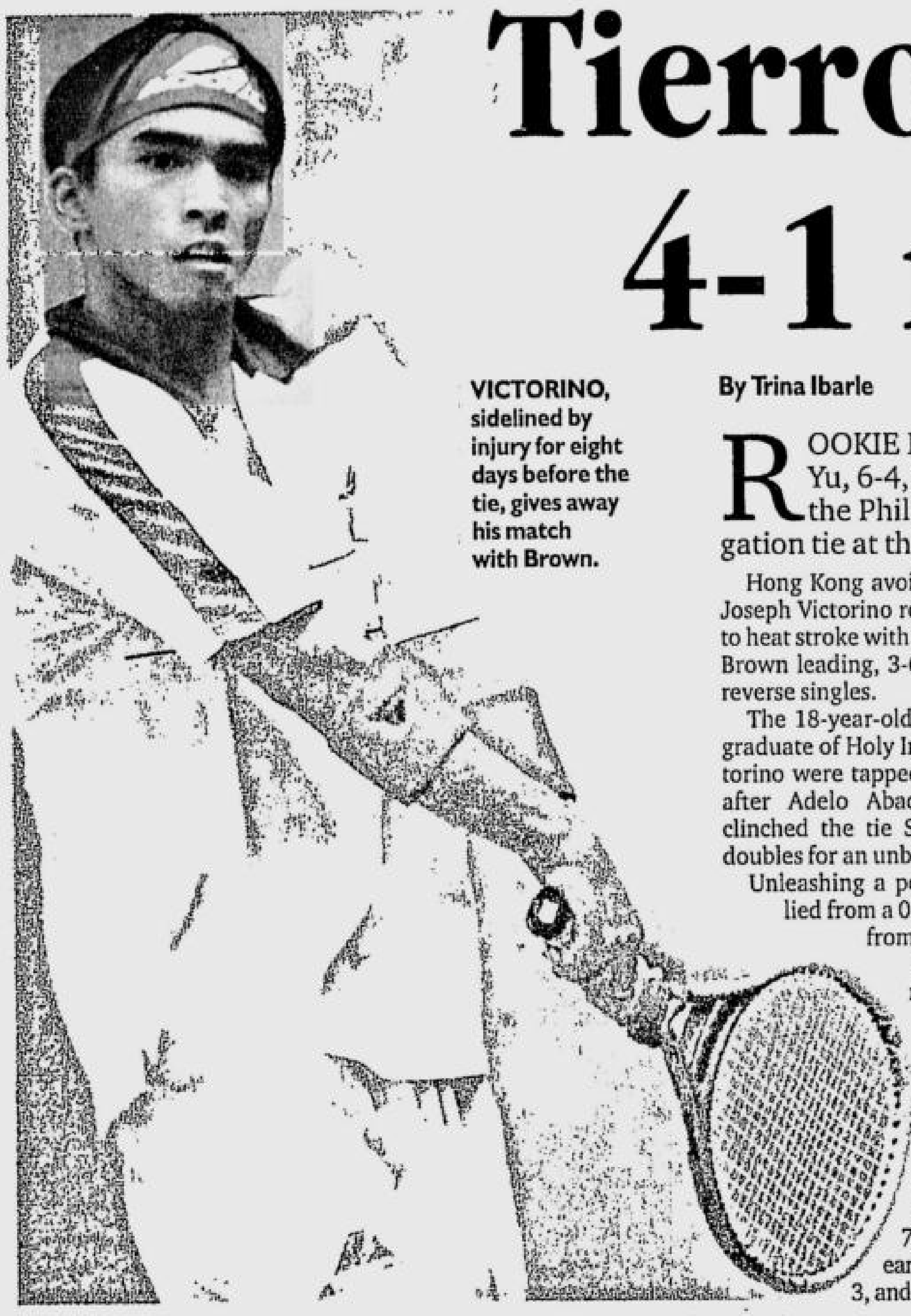
The tournament, exclusively for players 14 years old and below, is organized by the International Management Group.

First round winners will advance to the next stage which Pampanga will host on April 24-25. SM Southmall in Las Piñas holds the next stop on May 22-23, with the semifinals and the finals set May 28-29 at the SM Megamall, which will also host a celebrity tournament on May 30.

For details, call IMG at 751-6752/845-0162 or 725-2568/725-4942.

QUICKEST: Mike Tuason (center) of Tuason Racing-Addict Mobile scored his second straight victory in the Formula Rotax Juniors Class in the second leg of the Shell Karting Superseries recently at the Carmona Circuit Philippines. With him are (from left) fifth placer Lee Bumgarner of M&M Racing, third placer Manny Sy of Primus Racedevils, runner-up Marcel Thenu and fourth placer Archie Rubio.

Tierro caps RP's 4-1 rout of HK



VICTORINO, sidelined by injury for eight days before the tie, gives away his match with Brown.

By Trina Ibarle

ROOKIE Patrick John Tierro upset Hong Kong top seed Hiu Tung Yu, 6-4, 6-3, in a rousing Davis Cup debut yesterday that capped the Philippines' 4-1 win in the Asia-Oceania Zone Group II relegation tie at the Yñares Socio-Cultural Sports Center.

Hong Kong avoided a shutout loss when Joseph Victorino retired in the third set due to heat stroke with Hong Kong No. 2 Michael Brown leading, 3-6, 6-3, 1-0, in the second reverse singles.

The 18-year-old Tierro, a 6-foot-1 recent graduate of Holy Infant Jesus High, and Victorino were tapped to finish off the visitors after Adelo Abadia and Johnny Arcilla clinched the tie Saturday by winning the doubles for an unbeatable 3-0 RP lead.

Unleashing a powerful serve, Tierro rallied from a 0-2 deficit then broke away from 4-4 to take the first set.

Exploiting Yu's unforced errors from a weak forehand, Tierro raced to a 4-1 lead in the second set en route to securing the fourth victory for the John Henri Lhuillier-sponsored squad.

Abadia and Arcilla took the doubles at the expense of John Hui and Asif Ismail, 7-5, 6-2, 6-3. Abadia had earlier beaten Yu, 6-2, 6-1, 6-3, and Arcilla followed with a 2-6, 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 triumph over Brown last Friday.

Victorino showed signs of weakness and exhaustion midway in the second set after breezing past Brown in the first set.

After forging a 3-3 tie, Brown easily won the next three points to pave the way for a third set. Barely able to lift his racket, Victorino yielded the first point of the deciding set then quit.

Team captain Johnny Jose attributed Victorino's poor condition to his being sidelined by sickness and injury for eight straight days before the tie.

"I noticed that he was feeling weak in the first set, since he was pouring water over his head and he said he was getting dizzy. I told him to shorten his shots, but he still allowed long rallies that's why he got all the more weaker," said Jose.

Nevertheless, coach Martin Misa was pleased with the performance of the Filipinos, especially with Tierro's superb win.

"I'm very happy, especially with PJ (Tierro). He has a big man's game, he has a good serve and a strong forehand which he can depend on. He has the height and the game to go with it," said Misa.

Guidicelli grabs pole in Malaysia

KELANTAN, Malaysia—The Philippines' Matteo Guidicelli of Team CRG-Cebu overcame tough rivals to claim the pole position in today's kickoff of the Asian Zone Karting Open championship at the Kota Bahru Circuit here.

GUIDICELLI

Guidicelli, whose father is an Italian, actually started second but quickly wrested the lead from Malaysian Jazeman Firhamin in the qualifying round of the event dubbed as the "Royal Kelantan Silver Jubilee Kart Prix."

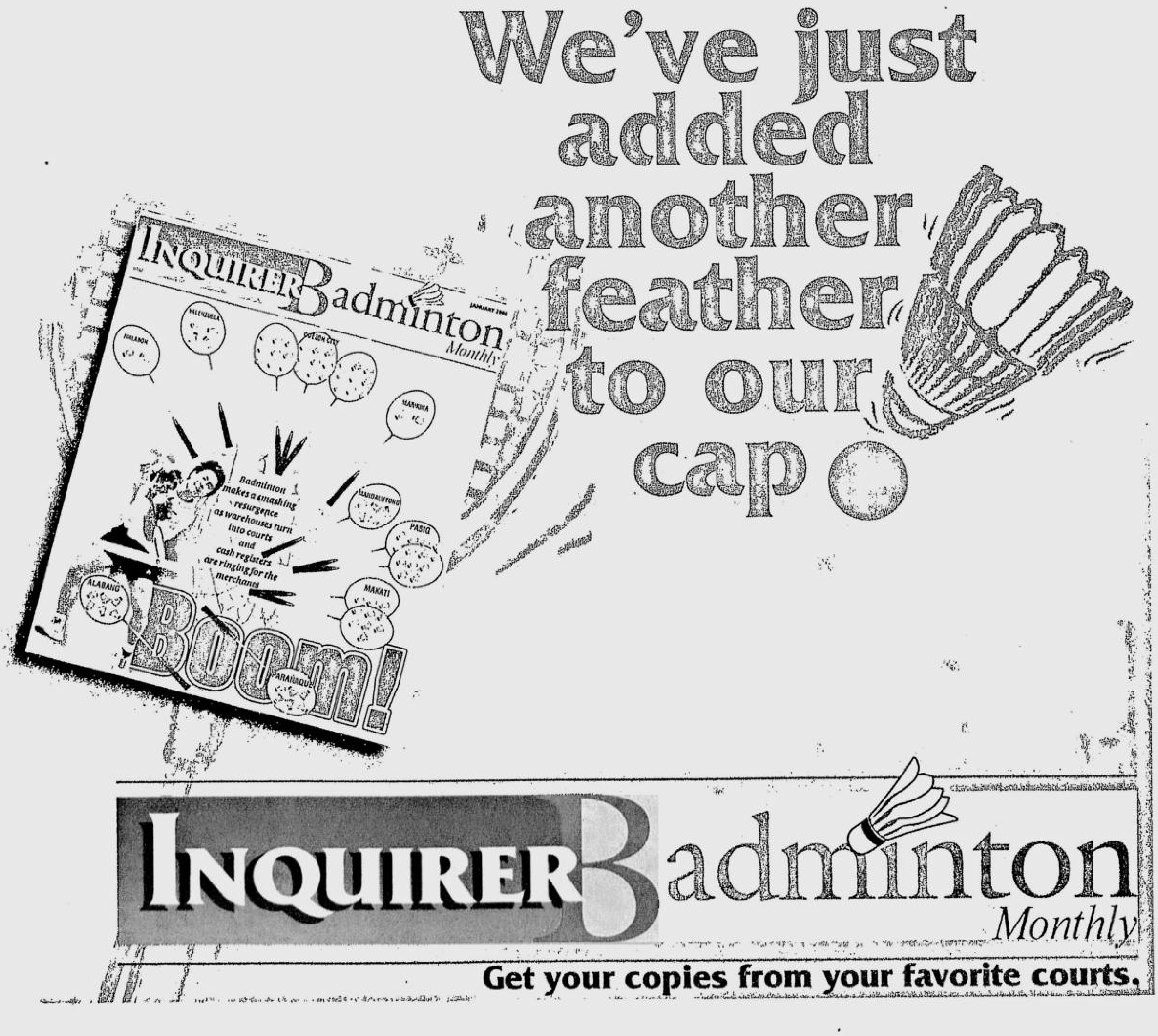
Setting the fastest laptime of 48.59 seconds, he finished the 15-lap race in 12 minutes and 19 seconds or 11 seconds ahead of Firhan.

Nik Irfan of Indonesia will be third on the grid in this morning's pre-final race.

"This year's staging was more challenging and Filipinos were really the marked men here. They (rivals) got better machines, they performed much better this year and I just hope we could still raise the Filipino flag up high in Asian karting," said Guidicelli, whose mother is a Cebuana.

Guidicelli topped both the second and final legs of last year's Asian Zone Open Karting Championships but failed to bag the crown after missing the kickoff leg.

But the first Asian karting crown still became a Philippine property thanks to Michelle Bumgarner.



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Mauresmo, Davenport make final

AMELIA ISLAND, Florida—Amelie Mauresmo of France dealt No. 1 Justine Henin-Hardenne just her second loss of the year, erasing a match point and beating the Belgian, 6-7 (4), 7-5, 6-3, in the semifinals of the Bausch & Lomb Championships.

MAURESMO AP

The 2-hour, 45-minute thriller put Mauresmo into the championship match against Lindsay Davenport of the United States, who came back from a set and breakdown to eliminate seventh-seeded Nadia Petrova of Russia, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1.

Petrova upset Serena Williams in the quarterfinals.

Davenport won this tournament in 1997 and lost in last year's final. Mauresmo won the clay-court title in 2001.

And Mauresmo clearly has recovered from the back injury that forced her to the sideline for the past 10 weeks. Playing in her first tournament since withdrawing from the Australian Open quarterfinals in January, Mauresmo changed speeds well Saturday.

"I had to mix things up," the Frenchwoman said. "I was very happy with the way I served. That's a part of my game I'm really pleased with right now."

With Henin-Hardenne up a set and leading 5-4 in the second, she held a match point. But she sent an easy forehand return into the net, watched one of Mauresmo's two aces of the match go past her, and then committed one of her 52 unforced errors.

So Mauresmo held to 5-5, then broke and held again to even the match at a set apiece.

"You need a couple of matches to get used to the surface," Henin-Hardenne said. "When I was aggressive, things were OK, but when I was too far from my baseline, it was very hard for me to stay aggressive."

She's now 25-2 in 2004, including four titles—one at the Australian Open.

Davenport was down 4-2 in the second set when she began a run of seven straight games. That gave her that set and a 3-0 lead in the third.

"When the second set was under my belt, I just felt a load of pressure off," Davenport said. "I played with a little more confidence. *AP*

MIKE Bryan (right) and his twin, Bob, do the chest bump after their doubles victory. REUTERS

DAVIS CUP

Bryans lift US netters to 2-1 lead

DELRAY BEACH, Florida—Bob and Mike Bryan gave the United States Davis Cup team a 2-1 lead over Sweden, beating Jonas Bjorkman and Thomas Johansson, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, Saturday.

The Americans can win the best-of-five quarterfinal by taking one of two singles matches Sunday. Andy Roddick plays first, with Bjorkman the probable opponent, and Mardy Fish follows against Thomas Enqvist.

"Andy is going to come with his game," United States captain Patrick McEnroe said. "It's going to be very tough to beat him."

The United States is 35-0 since 1987 when taking a lead into Sunday. The team that wins the three-day event will be at home in September against first-time semifinalist Belarus, which took an insurmountable 3-0 lead against Argentina on Saturday.

"We're good enough to win two matches," Bjorkman said. "But it's obviously going to be tough."

Bryan and Bryan served well and dominated at the net against the Swedes. The Americans directed many of their shots at Johansson, a replacement for Joachim Johansson, sidelined last week by a shoulder injury.

"I would do the same if I were the Bryans," Johansson said. "I knew when the ball was in play, they were going to fire at me."

While Johansson struggled with his volleys, Bjorkman served poorly, losing four of his first five service games—the first two times at love.

"Just a bad day at the office," Bjorkman said.

Left-hander Bob Bryan served an ace on match point, and the brothers celebrated with their trademark chest bump as Roddick and Fish cheered from the first row.

The American pair won several frantic exchanges, including one when Bob Bryan retreated to hit a shot between his legs that Bjorkman failed to handle. In the final set, Bryan crumpled to the court hitting a volley, and his team still won the point.

The victory delighted a lively, sunbaked crowd that included a pep band, lots of red, white and blue, and repeated chants of "U-S-A!"

"This is the best atmosphere we've ever been a part of," Mike Bryan said. "We've never been so jacked, and we're definitely going to bring out that chest bump every time we win a Davis Cup match." *AP*

Manager confident Beckham will be at his best in Euro tilt

LONDON—England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson says he is confident his skipper, David Beckham, will be at his best for the Euro 2004 finals this summer despite allegations about his private life.

The Real Madrid star has seen his name once again plastered over the tabloids in Britain this time around "kiss-and-tell" stories from a succession of women claiming to have had affairs with him.

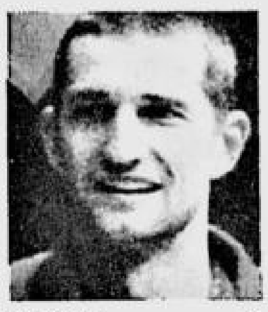
Beckham has denied the allegations and he and his wife, Victoria, have said their marriage will survive at all costs.

Eriksson, who elevated the quietly-spoken Beckham to the role of captain in a surprise move, said that the newspaper coverage was part of the package for top footballers like Beckham who are constantly in the public eye.

"All international players in England realize they have to live with this kind of thing. He is very strong," the England chief told the Mail on Sunday. *AFP*

Belarus entries oust Argentines

LONDON—World Group rookie Belarus thwarted Argentina's bid for a third straight Davis Cup semifinal appearance Saturday when Vladimir Voltchkov and Max Mirnyi defeated Lucas Arnold and Agustin Calleri, 6-3, 6-4, 6-1, to give their team an unbeatable 3-0 lead in the best-of-five quarterfinal tie.


MIRNYI AP

The Argentines were shorthanded, playing without injured stars Guillermo Coria and David Nalbandian.

"For 10 years we struggled for this result and today's victory was a reward for it," Belarus captain Sergei Teterin said.

In other quarterfinal ties, it was: France 2, Switzerland 1; United States 2, Sweden 1; and Spain 2, Netherlands 0.

Belarus and Argentina were evenly matched in the first set with the hosts saving two break points in the fifth game and two more in the seventh before scoring a decisive break in the eighth to take the lead.

Belarus converted a crucial break point in the ninth game of the second set when Calleri netted a backhand after Voltchkov's powerful first return, and dominated the third set of the match in front of a sellout crowd of 4,800. *AP*

Unbeaten colt heads Derby cast

NEW YORK—At long last, the field for the Kentucky Derby is beginning to take shape.

After a final round of major prep races Saturday, several contenders emerged as potential favorites for the Derby on May 1, including an unlikely, unbeaten colt named Smarty Jones.

Smarty Jones ran his undefeated streak to six with a dominating victory in the $1-million Arkansas Derby. A win in three weeks at Churchill Downs, and the Pennsylvania-bred would become the first undefeated Derby winner since Seattle Slew in 1977.

And Nick Zito will have a Derby horse, after all. The Cliff's Edge ran down pacesetting Lion Heart and won the $750,000 Blue Grass at Keeneland, saving what had been a week of disappointment for the two-time Derby winning trainer.

Zito scratched Birdstone from the Blue Grass on Thursday because the colt had a high white blood cell count, just a week after pulling Eurosilver out of the race with a gland infection.

In New York, Tapit punched his ticket to the Derby with a half-length victory over Master David in the $750,000 Wood Memorial at Aqueduct.

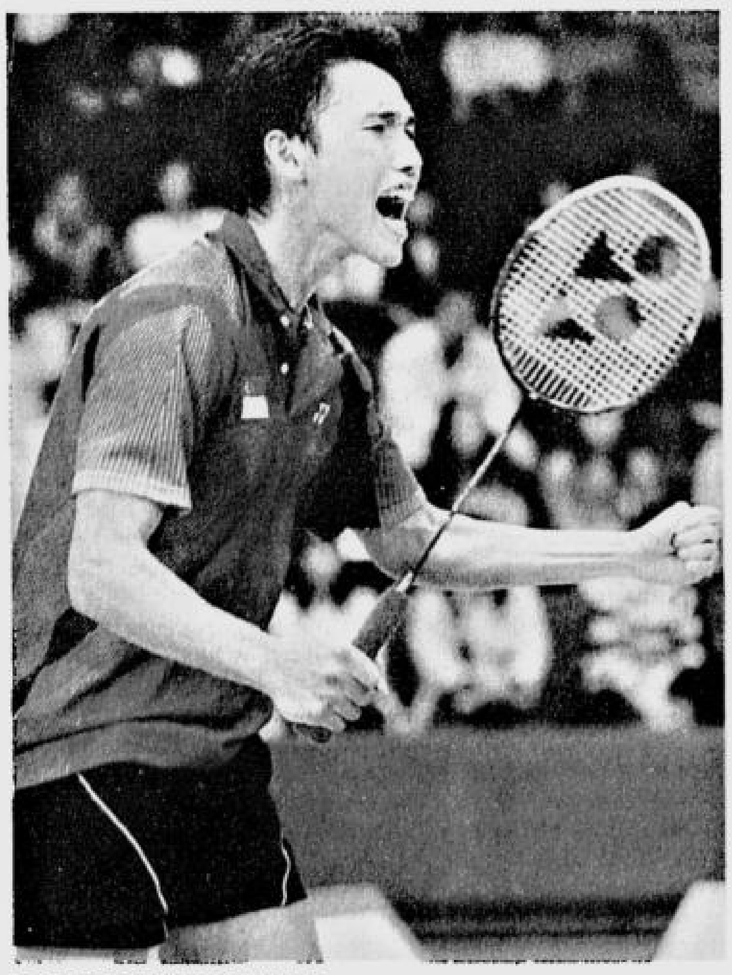
The road to the Derby has been so confusing this year, it's still tough to pick a clear-cut favorite. But a contender's list of nearly 40 horses was reduced quite a bit after the three 1 1/8-mile races.

"It's wide open," said Bobby Frankel, who trains Master David. "Everyone is so close."

The maximum Derby field is 20, and if more enter, the starters are determined by graded-stakes earnings. That meant finishing among the top three was imperative for any horse needing to improve his bankroll—starting with Smarty Jones.

Although he won his first five starts, including the Rebel at Oaklawn Park, none of the colt's victories came in graded stakes. Smarty Jones entered the Arkansas Derby with a big fat zero in graded stakes money—the win in the Grade 2 race was worth $600,000, boosting him into the top 20.

The Cliff's Edge, with his first win in three starts this year, solidified his Derby status with a $465,000 payday. Tapit soared into the top 20 with his Wood win—coming in, the gray colt was 28th with just $80,000. The win was worth $450,000. *AP*


BADMINTON CHAMP
Ronald Susilo of Singapore shouts in jubilation after beating Bao Chunlai of China, 15-13, 15-6, in the men's singles final of the Japan Open badminton championships in Tokyo yesterday. AFP

6 HOME RUNS

Twins tame Tigers, set mark

DETROIT—Minnesota set a Comerica Park record with six home runs, including two by light-hitting catcher Henry Blanco, and the Twins handed the Detroit Tigers their first loss of the season, 10-5, Saturday.

"The ball was really jumping out there today," Twins manager Ron Gardenhire said. "They've made some adjustments to this park, and the ball carries better than it used to, but days like this are still pretty unusual. Those weren't cheapies we were hitting, either."

Luis Rivas, Corey Koskie, Jose Offerman and Lew Ford also connected for the Twins, giving starter Brad Radke plenty of support.

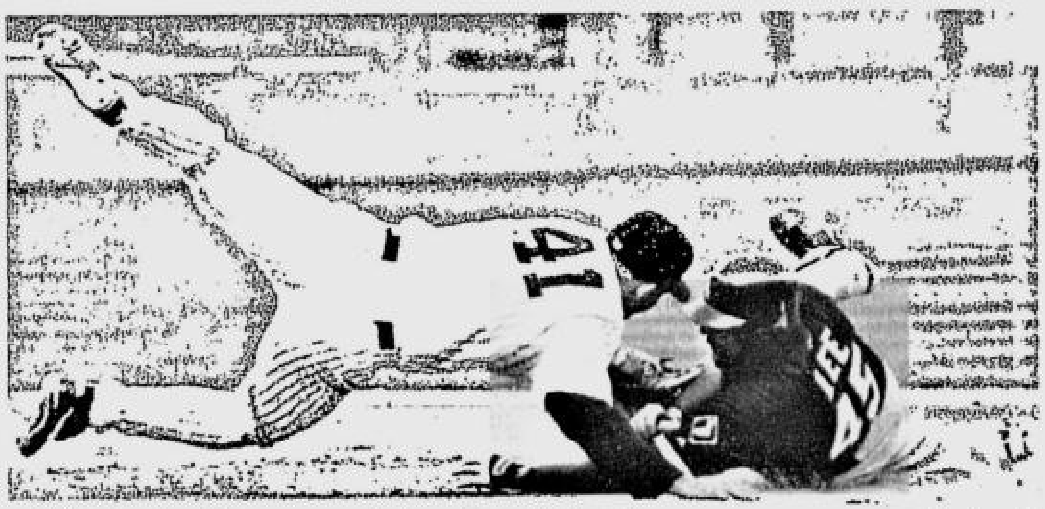
"I don't know what was going on out there," said Ford, called up from the minors Friday to replace injured center fielder Torii Hunter. "My head is still kind of spinning, but that was fun."

The Tigers, who opened last season 0-9 and lost an AL-record 119 games, had been the last unbeaten team in the majors at 4-0.

The previous record for home runs in a game at spacious Comerica Park was five, set by Boston on April 19, 2000, the year the park opened.

Radke (1-0) improved to 16-4 lifetime against Detroit. Five Twins relievers combined for four scoreless innings to finish it.

Jason Johnson (1-1) lost to the Twins for the first time in six career decisions, lasting just 2 1-3 innings.


NEW York Yankees second baseman Miguel Cairo (left) flips over after forcing out Chicago White Sox runner Carlos Lee in the eighth inning. The White Sox won, 7-3. REUTERS

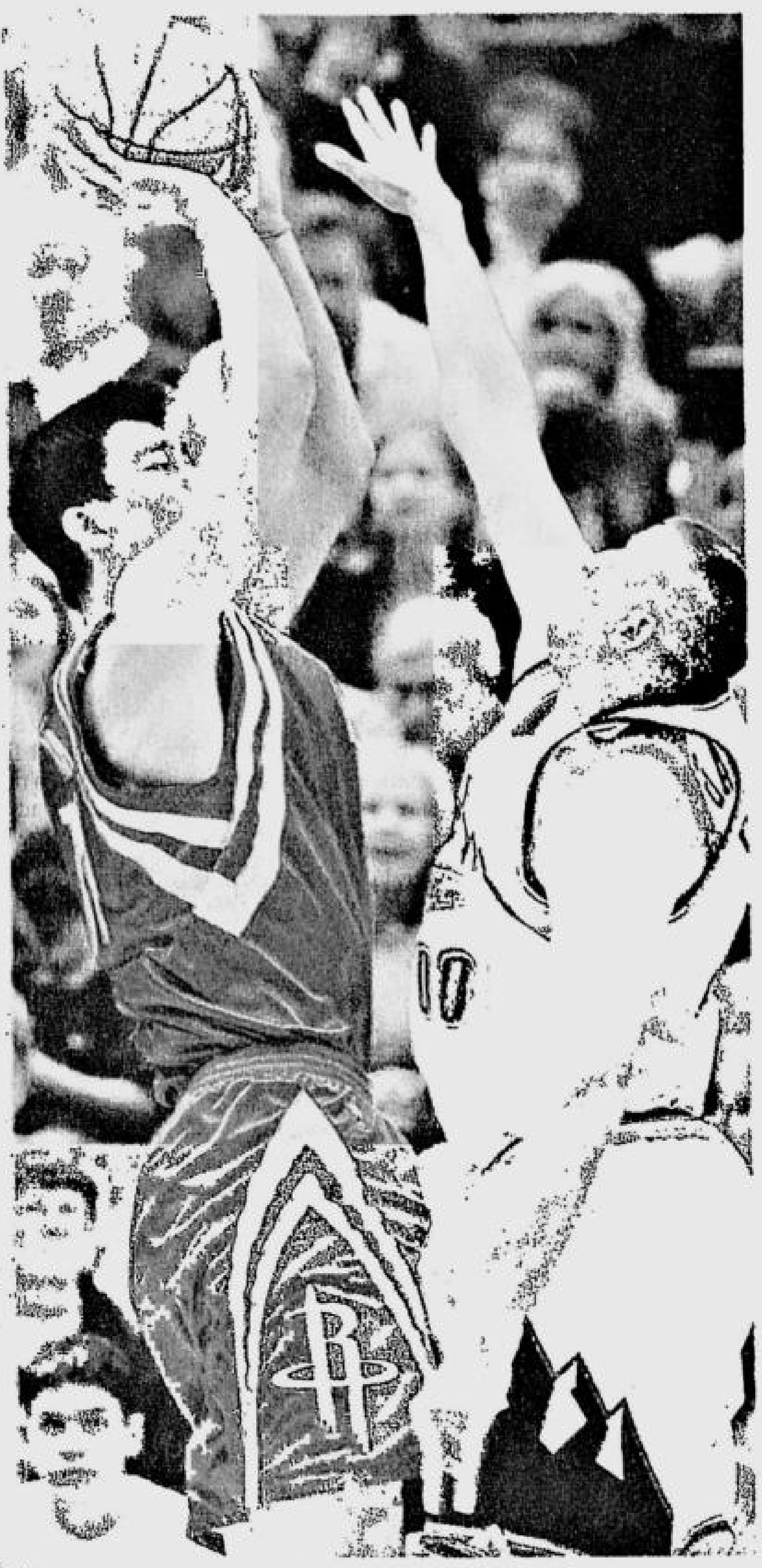
In New York, Mark Buehrle shut down New York on three singles over eight innings, and Magglio Ordonez and Jose Valentin homered to lead Chicago, 7-3.

New York's All-Star-laden lineup has scored just 16 runs in five games since its season-opening Tokyo trip, going 2-3 against Tampa Bay and the White Sox.

Complete results:

American League—Minnesota 10, Detroit 5; Chicago White Sox 7, NY Yankees 3; Kansas City 7, Cleveland 6 (10 innings); Oakland 2, Seattle 1; Baltimore 11, Tampa Bay 3; Boston 4, Toronto 1; Texas 12, Anaheim 6.

National League—Cincinnati 3, Pittsburgh 1; Milwaukee 6, Houston 1; Florida 5, Philadelphia 3; Atlanta 5, Chicago Cubs 2; Montreal 1, NY Mets 0; St. Louis 10, Arizona 2; San Diego 6, San Francisco 4; Los Angeles 7, Colorado 4



YAO Ming (left) puts up a jumper over Utah's Greg Ostertag. AP

NBA ROUNDUP

Sonics end Mavs run

SEATTLE—Rashard Lewis scored 25 points and the Seattle SuperSonics avoided being swept by the Dallas Mavericks this season with a 119-99 victory on Saturday.

Complete results:
Seattle 119, Dallas 99; Atlanta 110, Boston 99; Detroit 101, Orlando 89; NY Knicks 102, Washington 98 (OT); Cleveland 91, Miami 80; New Orleans 92, Milwaukee 87; Utah 82, Houston 69; Denver 110, Portland 100 (OT)

Dallas, which had a six-game winning streak snapped, played without No. 2 scorer Michael Finley, who sat out because of back spasms.

"Last year down the stretch, we just had that confidence that we were going to win the game," Dirk Nowitzki said. "I don't think this year we have that confidence down the stretch."

Rookie guard Marquis Daniels led the Mavericks with a career-high 33 points.

The Sonics are going to be an NBA lottery team for the second year in a row and the Mavericks are headed back to the playoffs, where they reached the Western Conference finals last season.

But Dallas looked like the lottery team as Nowitzki and Steve Nash had horrible shooting games. Nowitzki scored 10 points on 3-for-15 shooting, while Nash, who didn't score a basket until 5:59 was left, had four points on 2-for-10 shooting.

"All I can tell you is we were terrible and didn't deserve to win," Mavericks coach Don Nelson said.

The Sonics got 18 points from veteran guard Brent Barry, who may leave Seattle as a free agent during the off-season, and 17 points from Ray Allen, their only All-Star.

In Atlanta, Bob Sura had his second straight triple-double and the Atlanta Hawks prevented the Boston Celtics from clinching a playoff spot with a 110-99 victory.

Sura had 15 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds to become the first Atlanta player to have consecutive triple-doubles. The 6-foot-3 guard had 12 points, 12 assists and 11 rebounds Friday night in a 116-101 win at Chicago for the first triple-double of his career.

Stephen Jackson scored 28 points and Chris Crawford had 23 points for the Hawks, who are 3-0 against Boston this season.

The Celtics lost their fourth straight and still need one more win or a Philadelphia loss to clinch the eighth and final Eastern Conference playoff spot.

In Cleveland, Jeff McInnis scored 16 points, LeBron James added 11 assists and the Cleveland Cavaliers snapped a seven-game losing streak with a 91-80 win over the Miami Heat. The Cavaliers won for just the second time in 13 games. *AP*

Nuggets zero in on playoffs

DENVER—Carmelo Anthony called it the best game of his career. Given the circumstances, it would be hard to argue with the rookie.

Anthony scored 30 points, including six in overtime, and the Denver Nuggets took a major step toward their first playoff appearance in nine years with a 110-100 win Saturday night over the Portland Trail Blazers.

With two games remaining, Denver took a one-game lead over Portland and remained tied with Utah for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Western Conference. Utah beat Houston, 82-69, Saturday night. Denver owns the tiebreakers over both Utah and Portland.

Anthony scored seven of Denver's last nine points in regulation, capped by a 17-foot jumper that made it 94-94 with 3.7 seconds left. He then hit two jumpers early in overtime and added a fast-break slam dunk on a pass from Earl Boykins for a 104-95 lead with 1:39 left.

Anthony scored 23 points after halftime.

"My teammates had the confidence to get me the ball down the stretch and I answered," he said. "It's the best game I've ever played."

Nuggets coach Jeff Bzdelik said Anthony "made a lot of big-time shots. I've seen a lot of great clutch performances, and this rates with the very best."

Denver point guard Andre Miller said Anthony carried the Nuggets.

"The team was tired from back-to-back games. That was a great effort from the young fellow," Miller said.

Referring to Anthony's shot at the end of regulation, Miller said, "That was one of the biggest shots I've seen anybody hit."

The win assured Denver (42-38) of its first winning season since 1993-94.

Bzdelik isn't celebrating, yet.

"We have a big game Monday night," he said. The Nuggets play at home against Sacramento. *AP*

Brewster stops Klitschko; Spinks decisions Judah

LAS VEGAS—Lamon Brewster put a stunning end to the heavyweight hopes of one-half of the Klitschko brother team.

Brewster came off the canvas Saturday night to land a pair of smashing left hooks and turn the fight around in the fifth round, then won in bizarre fashion after the bell sounded to end the round when referee Robert Byrd waved the fight to an end.

Wladimir Klitschko, the 6-foot-6 Ukrainian who was dominating the fight when he got caught midway through the fifth round with the left hooks, was knocked out for the second time in his last four fights. He was taken to a hospital for a precautionary brain scan on the advice of ring doctor Margaret Goodman.

"It was kill or be killed," said Brewster, who was fighting for the first time in 13 months and was a 9-1 underdog on the day of the fight.

In the other fight on the card, Cory Spinks won a unanimous decision over Zab Judah to keep his 147-lb titles.

Brewster won the fringe WBO title and put himself in the heavyweight picture, while Klitschko might have to think about whether he will continue to fight. Klitschko's trainer said last month he would advise him to retire if he lost again.

Klitschko's brother, Vitali, was in the corner watching Wladimir dominate until the fateful fifth round. Vitali fights Corrie Sanders for the WBC heavyweight title in two weeks.

Byrd stopped the fight after Klitschko had gone down following an exchange with Brewster that lasted after the bell. Klitschko stumbled into the center of the ring and went down, but it wasn't ruled a knockdown because the bell had already sounded.

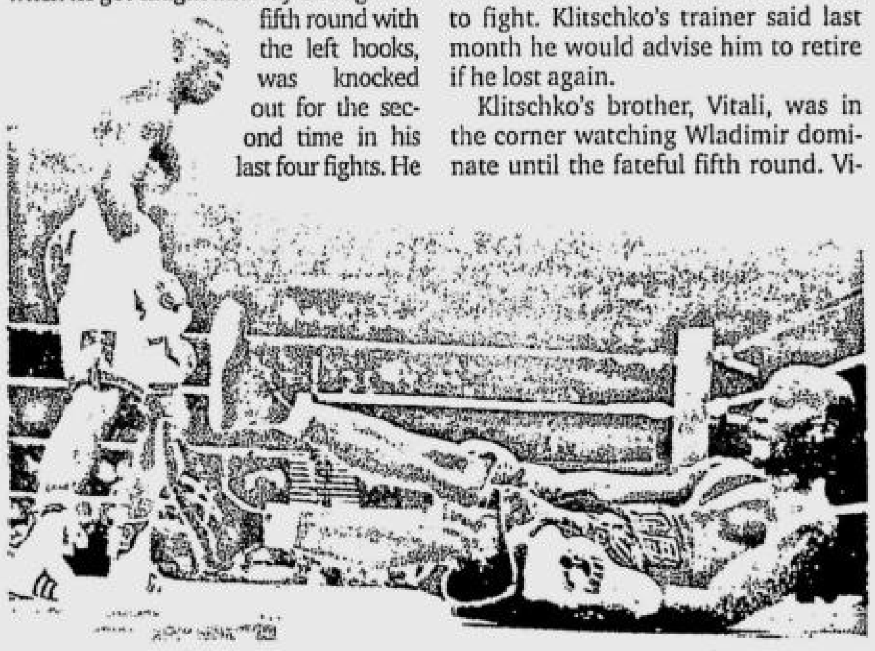
Klitschko, though, had trouble getting up, getting to his knees and then haltingly to his feet. Byrd stopped the fight as Klitschko stumbled to his corner, giving Brewster the win by TKO at 3:00 of the fifth round.

"He couldn't take care of himself," Byrd said. "I tried to get a response out of him but there was none. I've never stopped a fight like that before."

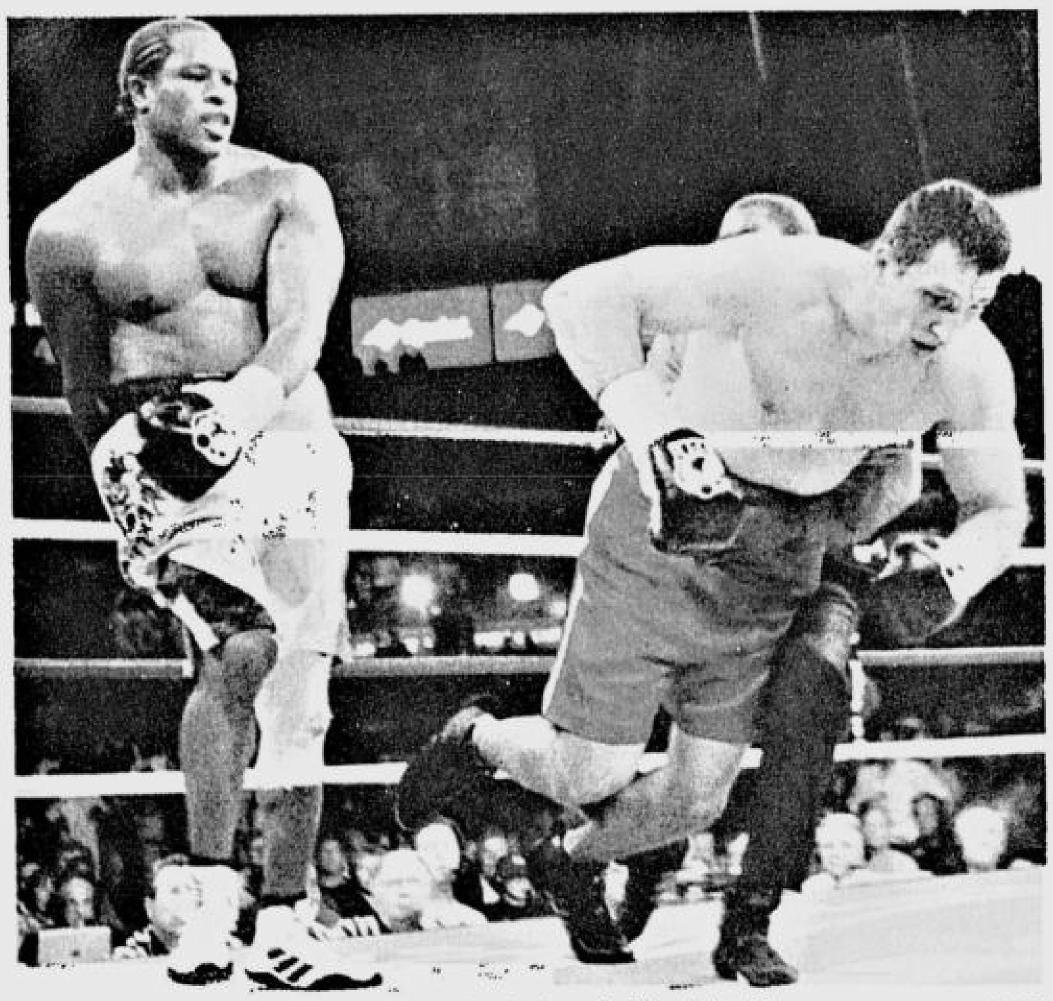
In the other fight, Spinks was boxing beautifully and seemingly on his way to an easy win against Judah. Then Spinks got careless, and almost lost his undisputed welterweight title on one big punch.

Spinks, despite a warning from his corner before the 12th round, had to get off the canvas with 25 seconds left to keep his 147-lb titles with a unanimous decision over the former 140-lb champion.

Spinks was well ahead on all three ringside scorecards and had knocked Judah down in the 11th round when he got some advice before the final round. *AP*



SPINKS (left) bears down on Judah in the 11th round. AP



BREWSTER (left) steps aside as referee Byrd tries to hold up Klitschko. REUTERS

Korean claims WBC crown

MANCHESTER, England—South Korea's In-jin Chi knocked out Michael Brodie in the seventh round Saturday night to win the vacant WBC featherweight title.

Six months after the two fought to a disputed draw, there was no doubt about the result this time as Chi overwhelmed the Manchester-born Brodie from the opening bell of the scheduled 12-round bout at the MEN Arena.

Chi floored Brodie with a right cross midway through the first round and kept up constant pressure with a nonstop barrage of powerful combinations. The win improved Chi's record to 28-2-1 (17 KOs). Brodie is 35-2-1. *AP*

Who needs Stanley Ho's gambling money?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THIS is too much.

Controversial gambling mogul Stanley Ho was reported recently as having expressed interest in expanding his business empire in the Philippines, including a plan to invest millions of pesos in the horseracing industry.

I find Ho's plan disgusting. The government should stop Mr. Ho from conducting his gambling operations here once and for all. His past shady record will speak for itself. During the short-lived term of President Joseph Estrada, Ho chaired the much disgraced BW Resources Corp., the gambling firm that nearly caused the total collapse of the securities market in 1999. Then in 2002, he lost his 42-year-old monopoly on gambling operations in Macau.

A few days ago, Ho was in the news again when he arrived at the Clark Special Economic Zone via his private jet from Hong Kong to receive an honorary doctorate degree from Angeles University Foundation in Pampanga. He was personally met by Presidential Assistant on Foreign Investment Dan Roleda, who reportedly came aboard a government helicopter, an event recorded both in print and in photo by Tonette Orejas of the PDI Central Luzon Desk.

As a result, Malacañang has ordered Roleda to explain why he met with the gambling mogul without permission from the Palace. Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo said his office was reviewing the propriety of a government official like Roleda welcoming Ho, the controversial gambling operator whose previous plan to make business in the Philippines was blocked by Church protests during the Estrada administration. Romulo added that Roleda's appointment was also under review. President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Roleda to the post, which has the same rank as a department undersecretary, only a few days before Ho's arrival to receive the honorary degree from AUF.

Following the conferment of that doctorate degree on Ho, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, a past AUF honoree himself, returned his own award in protest, saying he just did not want to belong to the same league with a man who is known across Asia and around the world as a casino king. Cruz is the head of the anti-gambling campaign of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

Methinks it's time to stop this propensity to promote gambling in our strife-torn country. The President is firmly against any form of gambling because it undermines the moral fiber of the nation. Gambling operators should take the cue and abandon their plan of promoting a culture of gambling among the youth.

"People need jobs, not gambling," said former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez, who once ordered the closure of two casinos in 1990 when he was the city's chief executive. A much respected businessman and high-ranking Olympic boxing official, Lopez is seeking his old seat against incumbent Mayor Lito Atienza.

At present, there are only two franchise holders for horseracing in the country, the Manila Jockey Club Inc. (operators of the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite) and the Philippine Racing Club (Santa Ana Park in Makati City). Incidentally, many racing buffs say the design of the new 77-hectare San Lazaro Leisure Park is similar to that of the Taipa racecourse of the Macau Jockey Club, where Ho is chairman of the board. Is this only a coincidence? I also gathered that MJCI will soon be leasing two floors of its Turf Club Building to the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., which is planning to set up and operate casino operations. I hope this isn't true.

The government's daily take from legalized gambling (casino operations, horseracing and cockfighting) is nearly P70 million. This should not be encouraged any further because of its negative effect on the people.

***

WHY RP SPORTS IS IN TURMOIL. As a result of the in-fighting and bickering among officials in chess, basketball and golf, Philippine sports is not making any headway, leaving the athletes more confused and demoralized in their training for future international meets, including the coming Olympic Games in Athens this August.

Why can't we get our act together?

In this ongoing feud, things will only get worse because once our quarreling sports leaders lose the respect of the athletes and the trust of the few remaining sponsors, Philippine sports will eventually die.

Another reason why Philippine sports is ailing is because of the frequent changes in the government. There is no continuity of plans and programs. Officials of the Philippine Olympic Committee are always divided while their counterparts in the Philippine Sports Commission are political appointees who have little or no experience in sports at all.

Ain't this a shame?

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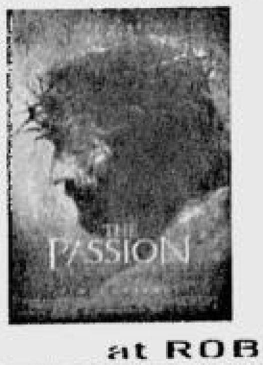

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Cover Girl upsets rivals

LONGSHOT Cover Girl came up with a big run in the stretch to overhaul Moab and score a stirring upset in the second leg of the Road to Triple Crown Stakes yesterday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

Ridden by Eldy Salvador, Cover Girl finished the 1,600-m race two lengths ahead of third pick Moab, who appeared headed for victory after setting a brisk pace.

Cover Girl netted P450,000, while the Jeff Zarate-steered Moab settled for P168,750.

Top choice Empire King, with Jonathan Hernandez taking over the reins from the suspended Jeffrey Ladiana, tried to get near Moab at the far turn but could not gain any further and finished only third.

Far second favorite Don Paolo was never in the hunt and arrived fourth. Toril came in fifth followed by Semper Spirit and Batangas Force.

Cover Girl covered the race in a fast 1:40 flat (25-23.5-24.5-27).

The event served as a run-up to the first leg of the Triple Crown series (Cojuangco Cup) slated May 23 also at the SLLP.

Speed O'War won the first leg of the "Road" series sponsored by the Philracom.

PBA tour stops at SM Sucat

THE PBA summer bash resumes today with SM Sucat hosting the weeklong touring display featuring hand-and-shoe print and photo galleries of top PBA players and a merchandise booth.

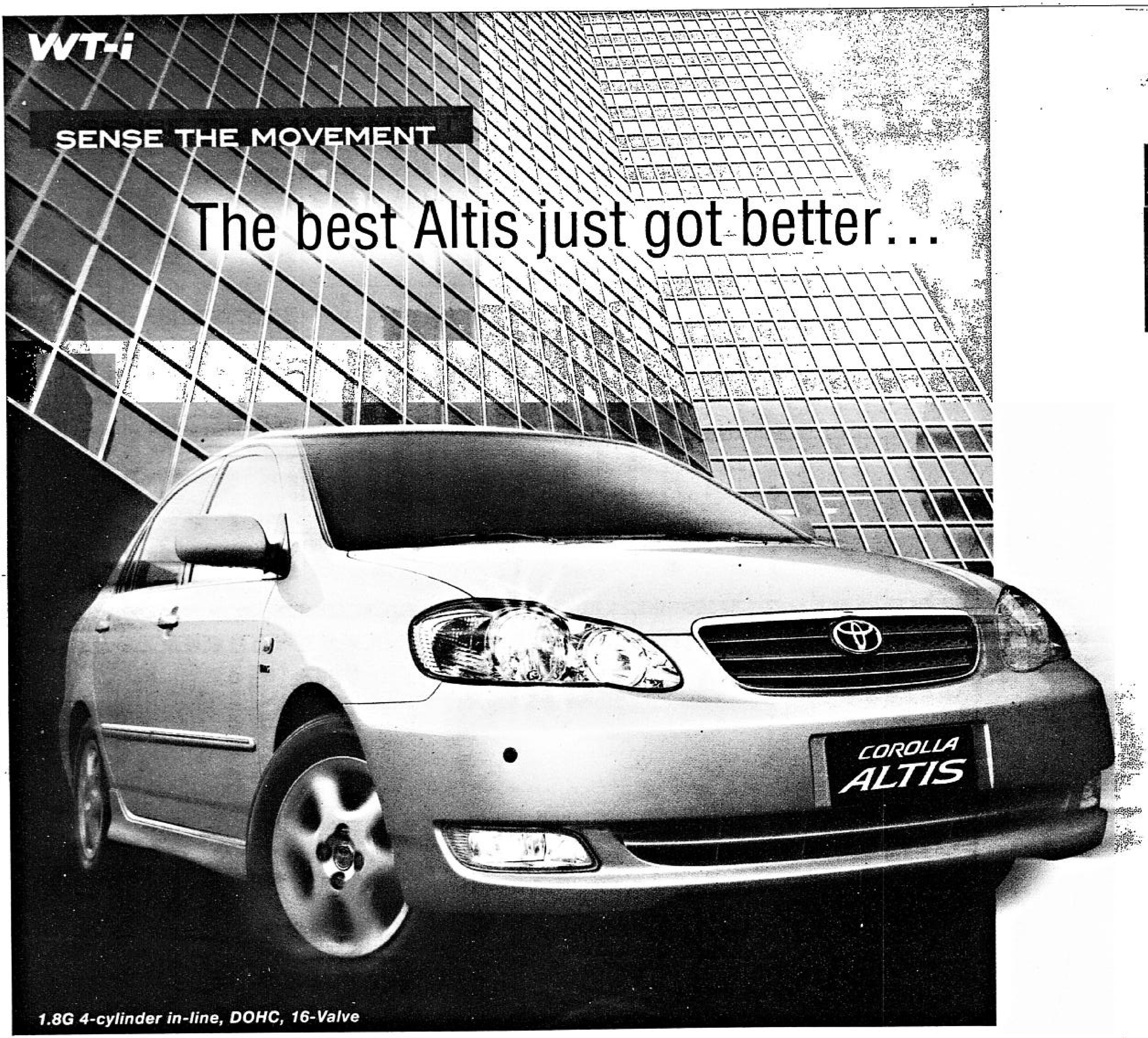
Alaska cagers are expected to grace the event and treat the fans to a workshop of sorts on Wednesday in the fifth week of the sports tour launched by the PBA last month as part of its continuing effort to bring the league closer to the people and give the PBA fans something to look forward to this summer season.

Aside from the galleries and the souvenir booth, the activity centers feature displays such as the inflatable basketball hoop, PBA snap shots, Molten basketball museum and a half-court area.

These centers are actually set up on two designated SM malls each week till May 9 to be spiced up by a rotation of visits by the PBA cagers and teams.

The San Miguel Beer players, meanwhile, will treat fans to a two-day workshop at SM Baguio beginning today. The organizing PBA Properties Inc. said the fans' response has been tremendous since it was launched at the SM Megamall last March.

The summer bash, presented by JVC and Globe Telecom and sponsored by Toby's Sports, Purefoods, Accel, Air 21, Molten and Mail & More, winds up at SM Bacoor May 2-9.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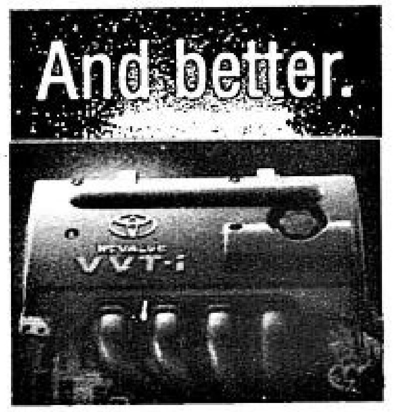

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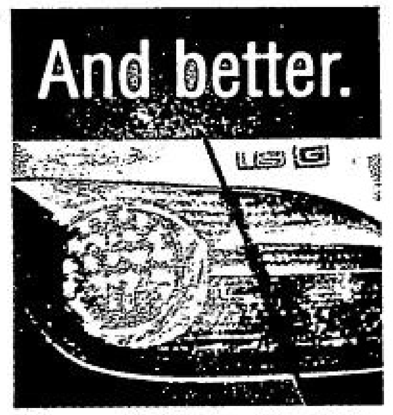

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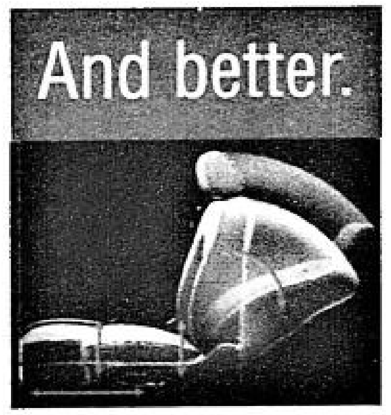

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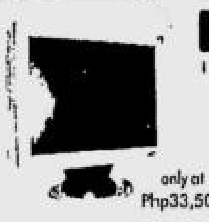

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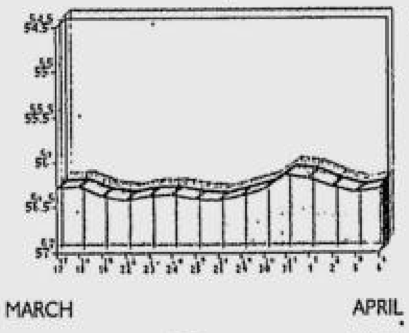

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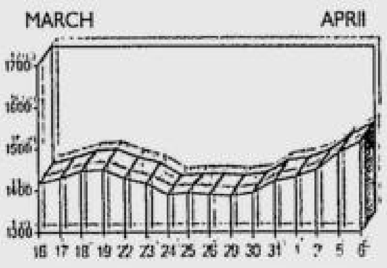
STOCK MARKET

Cautious trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

ANALYSTS are expecting a cautious trading week ahead, after a surge last week, that was brought about by foreign buying.

"It's a tough call. It's difficult to tell what will happen to the market (this week) because of the long break. Investors might still be out," Oliver Plana, head of head of sales at Asiasec Equities Inc., said.

Trading resumes today after a five-day Lenten break. Analysts also said foreign investors might still be on a buying mode as net foreign buying was evident despite the shortened trading week.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) surged 66 points or 4.5 percent week-on-week to 1,516.81 last week.

Peso trades averaged P679 million last week with foreign buying at an average of P481 million. Foreign selling was at an average of P235 million. As a result, net foreign buying amounted to P245 million.

Even with the foreign-led trades, Plana said some selling pressure was felt at certain Phisix levels between 1,520 and 1,530.

"The market seems to be facing some resistance like in the last run-up," he said.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. led market buying as it soared 6.5 percent to P1,055 last week.

PLDT said it would announce its first quarter results by the first week of May as investors expected a good first quarter for the country's dominant fixed line carrier.

"In terms of price to earnings multiples, it compares favorably with the others in the region. We still have a buy recommendation on the issue," Plana said.

Analysts said PLDT shares that were traded on Wall Street also gained last week following reports of better first quarter earnings.

" Global bullishness on equities has momentarily helped investors forget about their concerns on the elections and the government's fiscal deficit. Notwithstanding, the market should be due for a technical correction," Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities Inc., said.

Giving the market some boost was the news that the government's budget deficit for the first quarter was below target at P57 billion to P58 billion as indicated by the Department of Budget and Management.

Higher revenue collections and continued fiscal discipline helped the government contain the budget deficit within the ceiling reports indicated.

CAUTIOUS/ B7

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INVESTMENTS in the country s economic zones ballooned by 515.6 percent to P21.87 billion in the first quarter from only P3.55 billion in the same period last year, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority said.

Peza data showed that in March alone, some P8.99 billion worth of projects were approved for registration and incentives as ecozone enterprises.

This was 1,829 percent more than the P466 million in the same month last year.

A total of 37 projects were approved last month: 10 were new export manufacturing ventures; 16 expansion of existing export manufacturers; seven information technology projects, and four warehousing and logistics facilities. The number of export manufacturing ventures approved last month (26) was 63 percent better than the 16 in March last year.

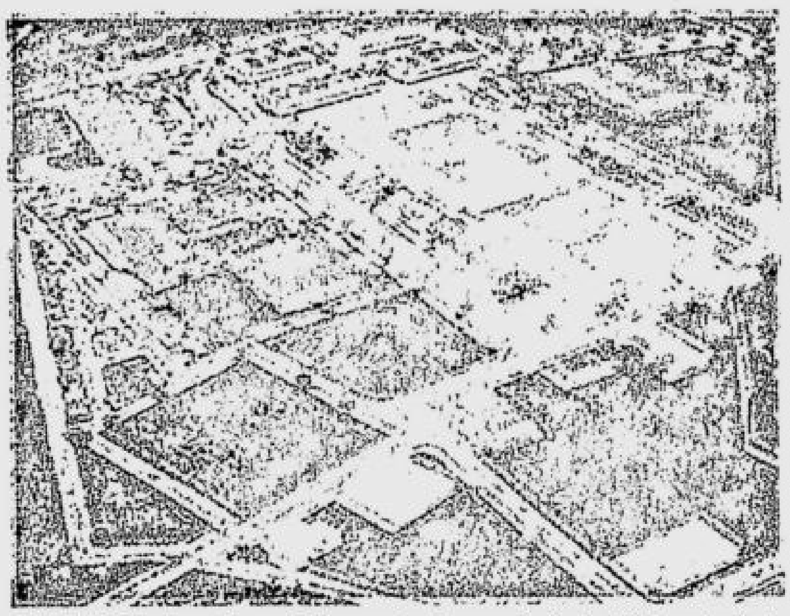
The biggest project registered during the month was the P3.1-billion spindle motors manufacturing venture of Nidec Philippines Corp., owned 100 percent by a Japanese firm. The project will be put up in Laguna Technopark Inc.

For the first quarter, the number of projects registered grew by 39 percent to 78 from 56 last year.

The seven information technology projects in March accounted for P1.6 billion of the total investments during the month. For the first quarter, IT investments reached P2.6 billion, up 89.4 percent from P1.4 billion in the same quarter last year.

Peza director general Lilia B. de Lima said the investment registration in the ecozones in the first nine weeks of the year indicated that an upturn in business had started.

De Lima said a comparison of Peza-registered investments in January, February and the first week of March indicated that 2004 would be a very exciting year.



AN AERIAL view of one of the country's premier industrial parks that also houses a government-designated special economic zone.

Total ecozone investments in the first nine weeks of the year reached P14.94 billion, an increase of about 364 percent from P3.22 billion in the same period of 2003. This represented more than half of total ecozone investments in 2003 amounting to P28.4 billion, she said.

She said that as of end-2003, there were 100 proclaimed economic zones in the country.

BSP plans to tighten rules on bank directors, officers

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is planning to further tighten its rules on interlocking bank directorships to ward off possible conflict of interests among top bank officers.

Only a month after it issued a circular prohibiting interlocking directorships—which however allows certain exemptions—BSP Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Alberto Reyes said the matter was again subject to review.

He told reporters that the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board was concerned that the flexibility allowed by the circular on bank directorships could be detrimental to a bank's interests.

"Under the present rules, we allow interlocking directorships provided they are approved by the Monetary Board, but the board wants to make sure that there really are no conflicts of interests," Reyes said.

"The board wants to revisit this rule and it may opt to entirely prohibit it (interlocking directorship)," he said.

He said the usual reason why there were interlocking directorships among banks and their affiliates was to reduce overhead costs.

"It is a compromise with the banks, but we have to find out the actual situation. It's difficult to sit in the board of one bank and also in another affiliate bank. There may really be conflict of interest," he explained.

Based on a circular issued last March 9, the MB allows interlocking directorships between a bank and not more than two of its subsidiary financial institutions or between two banks and one of their subsidiary non-bank financial intermediaries.

Occupying multiple officer positions by one person may also be allowed between banks or between a bank and a non-bank financial intermediary, other than an investment house. This, however, is subject to a condition that at least 20 percent but less than the majority of the equity of each of the banks or intermediaries is owned by a holding company.

The circular indicated that the interlocking arrangement "must be necessary for the holding company or the bank to provide technical expertise or managerial assistance to its affiliates." Another condition for this is that the positions to be held by an officer should not involve any functional conflict of interests.

BOP seen to post surplus in March

THE COUNTRY'S balance of payment (BOP) position is seen to improve, if not return to a surplus, this month in view of net inflows from fresh public sector borrowings.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the country's BOP should recover in March with the huge increase in gross international reserves.

The BSP's net international reserves as of end-March, inclusive of revaluation of reserve assets and reserve-related liabilities, stood at $13.6 billion, 5.5 percent better than the end-February level.

The NIR level, exclusive of revaluation, stood at $12.28 billion as of end-March last year.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the country and the rest of the world. Its major components are the current account and the capital and financial account.

The current account records trade in goods and services, while the capital and financial account covers loan transactions, investment flows, short-term capital and other related items.

Any transaction that calls for an outflow of foreign exchange, like importation or offshore investment, is considered a deficit item.

BOP/ B6

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RP asks China to lower tariff on coconut oil

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINES is seeking a reduction in the tariffs slapped on its coconut oil exports to China to levels at par with that charged on exports of Malaysia and Indonesia.

"From the current level of 20 percent, we are requesting that this be brought down initially to 10 percent and eventually to 5 percent," said Philippine Coconut Authority Administrator Danilo Coronacion said in an interview.

The PCA chief said the tariff imposed on coconut oil was much higher than the 5 percent slapped on Malaysian and Indonesian lauric acid exports.

Coronacion said the issue would be included in the agenda of the bilateral talks between Philippine and Chinese governments later this month. The Philippine panel will be led by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The country currently exports 122,000 metric tons of crude coconut oil, coconut chemicals and coco coir worth $35 million.

In another development, the agriculture department and the coconut industry are working on regaining the country's foothold for copra meal in the European market. Exports of this product to Europe dropped 19 percent last year, or $20 million in revenue losses, when European authorities tightened its regulations.

To cope with the stringent regulations imposed by the European Union on its copra meal imports, the DA, the Philippine Coconut Authority and the private sector are pooling their resources to buy 17 units of copra driers to be distributed nationwide.

The proper drying procedure would enable copra producers to meet the maximum level of alflatoxin levels of 20 parts per billion (ppb) as prescribed by the EU, much lower than the 200 ppb that the local production contain.

Philippine copra meal is used as ingredient for livestock feeds in European countries. However, in August 2003, the EU tightened its food safety measures in view of the mad cow disease outbreak. High aflatoxin levels in animal feeds are suspected as a possible source of the mad cow disease.

Aflatoxins are also believed to be cancer-causing agents when passed on to humans.

Coronacion said some P225 million in funding was needed to acquire the needed copra driers.

He said financing could be obtained from Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp.

BSP OKs Bankard 7-yr reserve build up

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has given Bankard Inc. seven years from 2004 to 2010 to meet the new reserve requirement required for credit card receivables.

Bankard chair Cesar E.A. Virata said the company, being a new acquisition of RCBC Capital, sought the extension to give it time to finalize a financial road map to fine-tune its operations, put in place strategic measures to bring in more revenues while reducing expenditures, and raise capital.

"Already, Bankard has entered into an agreement with a local partner to develop a fee-based business that capitalizes on the rapidly growing card transactions through the web," Virata said. He said the deal was expected to contribute an additional 10-12 percent in revenue to Bankard this year.

"We are looking for new businesses on top of the regular services of credit card companies. Our thinking is that to compete well, we must be able to offer more," he said.

Since its acquisition by RCBC Capital from Equitable PCI Bank in 2000, Bankard has improved its credit processes, operations control, marketing, and customer service to better manage risks, reduce costs, generate higher revenues through higher card usage, and raise customer satisfaction.

"We are in the process of refining Bankard's business-building plans, and getting more time to meet the new reserve levels gives us ample leeway in projecting and planning Bankard's future," he said.

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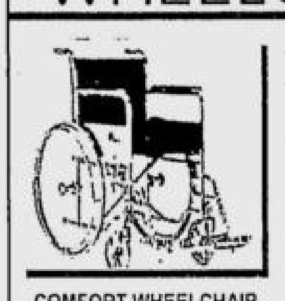
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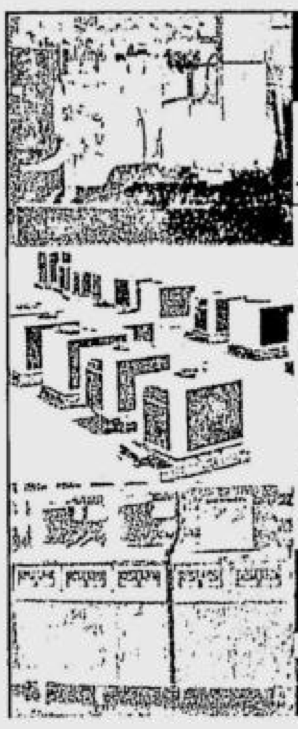

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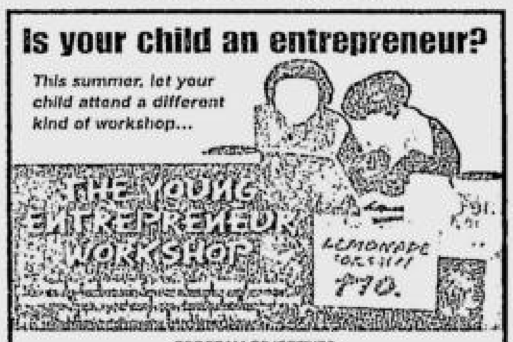
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PAL working on resumption of flights to India, Europe

By Clarissa S. Batino

TAIPAN Lucio Tan is pushing for the resumption of Philippine Airlines' flights to India and Europe, particularly Italy, before 2006, according to PAL president and chief operating officer Avelino Zapanta.

Zapanta said Tan, chair and chief executive officer of the country's flag carrier, had given the airline two years to work on this.

But before the flag carrier could mount flights to India and Europe, the Philippines needed to forge an air agreement with New Delhi and the different European countries.

PAL, Asia's oldest airline, stopped flying to India as early as 1954 when then President Magsaysay issued a policy to stop foreign flights in favor of rural development program.

Services to Europe were stopped in 1998 at the height of a stand-off between the airline's management and flight and ground crew.

After years of absence, he said PAL was planning to return to these two crucial destinations.

Civil Aeronautics Board executive director Tomas Manalac said India had indicated willingness to hold air talks with the country. India has already drafted an air deal proposal but the Philippines has yet to respond to it.

Manalac said the country's air panel chaired by the Transportation Department has yet to meet to study India's proposal. The reconstituted panel is also comprised of representatives from the foreign affairs, tourism, trade, the CAB as well as executives from PAL and Cebu Pacific.

According to Zapanta, PAL wanted to take advantage of the growing tourism and information technology industries in India. The flag carrier also wanted to cash in on increasing deployment of Filipino overseas workers to Europe, particularly in Italy.

"PAL began flying to India in 1946, particularly to New Delhi and Calcutta. PAL is the first international airline they saw there," he said.

The number of Indian tourists flying overseas was expected to jump to six million this year, up 30 percent from 2003.

Bankers, insurers and conflicts of interest

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

BANKERS and insurers have been linked in a cordial embrace for something like three hundred years. When the British were building their empire around the globe, a group of intrepid risk takers would gather in Edward Lloyd's coffee shop in London to engage in the infant business of marine insurance. The availability of marine insurance covering cargo on board vessels sailing the seven seas sparked the tremendous growth in international trade. Bankers were willing to lend money to traders since the insurers guaranteed the loss to the cargo during the voyage. Both were happy to make money their separate ways, the banker by charging interest, the insurer by collecting premiums.

Today, things are a lot different. In the Philippines as in some other countries around the world, the embrace sometimes has turned into a bear hug.

Some banks have taken majority positions in insurance companies. Others have gone as far as putting up wholly owned insurance companies. There is really nothing intrinsically wrong in a bank's investing in an insurance company. But the bank has to tread carefully. Otherwise, it will find itself locked in the horns of a terrible conflict of interest.

Let us say you want to import some stuff from Japan. You open a letter of credit at the bank. You are told to buy your marine insurance policy from the bank's own insurance company. The policy will specify that any loss will be payable to the bank. Supposing something happens to your cargo. But, for some reason, the insurance company turns down your claim. Whose side will the bank be on? It should take your side, but the bank then will be going against its own insurance company. You see the terrible conflict of interest the bank finds itself in.

Let us take another case. You borrow money from the bank to remodel your house. You are told to buy your fire insurance policy from the bank's own insurance company. Again, the policy will say that any loss will be payable to the bank. In the late stage of work, somebody throws a lighted cigarette into some wood shavings. The ensuring fire razes your house to the ground.

You do not agree with the computation of the loss presented to you by the company appointed adjuster. There's nothing illegal about the deal. It is all a difference in opinions. Whose side will the bank be on? The bank should take you side, but if it does, it goes against its own insurance company. See the terrible conflict of interest the bank finds itself in?

If the bank has no connection whatsoever with the insurance company in either of the cases I have described above, the bank can exert its tremendous clout on the insurance company to have your claim paid in full.

There is another point. In 1994, the Insurance Commission broke up the fire insurance cartel that had dictated the premium rates for decades. Today, fire insurance costs about one-third what it used to cost before the break up of the cartel. When a bank forces the borrower to buy his fire insurance from the bank's own company, the bank, in effect, tells the borrower to buy from a monopoly, at a higher price, of course. In other words, the insurance industry has gone one way; the banks are going the opposite way.

In the US, it is illegal for a bank, or any lender of money, to specify that the insurance policy required under a loan agreement should be taken out from a particular company, broker, or agent. But the law recognizes the right of the bank to draw up a list of acceptable companies, brokers or agents.

We do not have a similar law. Law or no law, a bank should not specify the insurance company, but it can have a list of acceptable, or accredited, insurance companies. But, above all, the bank should realize that if a client qualifies for a loan, he should be capable of arranging the best insurance program for himself. In insurance, what is good for the borrower is good for the bank. The reverse is not necessarily true.

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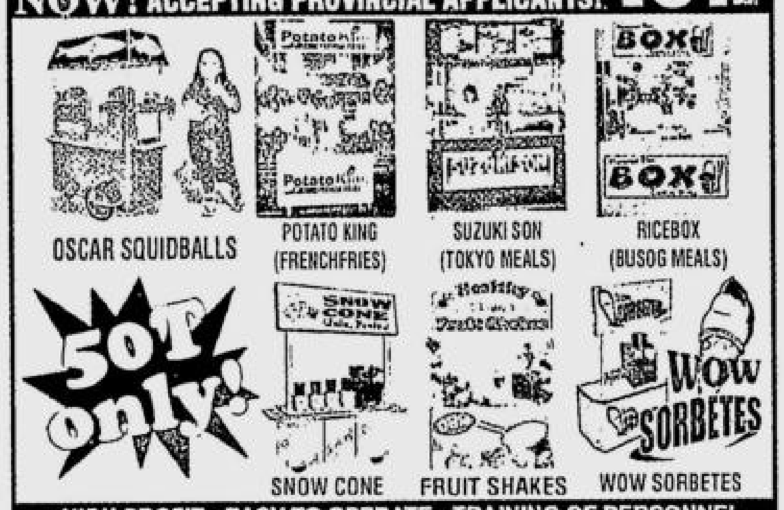

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Meat processors urged to breach $1-B overseas food market

TRADE Secretary Cesar V. Purisima is urging local meat processors to penetrate the billion-dollar food market for Filipinos abroad by providing them with native dishes.

In a recent dialogue with the Pampanga Meat Processors Association Inc. or Pampro, Purisima said that grabbing even a mere 10 percent of the overseas Filipino market could provide the much needed revenue for local food firms.

The official said that an estimated 8 million Filipinos living overseas is a sizable market waiting to be served.

"A minimum spending of $10 per person on food per year translates to $80 million in revenues a year," Purisima said. "If their food consumption reaches $100 per person, it could go up to $800 million each year."

He said that the estimates are generally conservative and that it could go as high as $1,000 per person per year or $3 per day on food items.

He said that Filipinos abroad are getting their food from Thai or other Asian producers because local food firms have yet to fully explore this market opportunity. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

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   Phil-Data Business Systems, Inc.
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   Pasong Tamo St., Makati City 1231
6. Deadline for submission of entries is on June 15, 2004
7. Raffle draw will be on June 29, 2004, 5:30 pm at the Phil-Data Business System, Inc. Makati Office, in the presence of a DTI representative.
8. Prizes are NOT convertible to cash.
9. A participant can win only once. If a name wins more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize.
10. Winners will be notified via registered mail on how, when and where to claim their respective prizes. List of winners will also be published in a newspaper of general circulation.
11. Winners must bring a valid ID and the copy of the registered mail when claiming prize. For Metro Manila winners, prizes can be claimed at the Phil-Data Office located at 4th Floor King's Court II Bldg.,Pasong Tamo St., Makati City 1231. For provincial winners, prizes can be claimed at OKI Ribbon Reseller indicated in the Registered mail.
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17th Golden Shell Awards
EXCELLENCE IN EXPORTS

Call for Nomination

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), through the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM), is in search of nominees for the 17th Golden Shell Awards (GSA). The country's prestigious and most-coveted export award is given to Filipino companies excelling in the following categories:

1. EXCELLENCE AWARDS

A. For Export Manufacturers
a. Design Excellence
b. Manufacturing Excellence
c. Marketing Excellence

B. For Service Exporters
a. Design Excellence
b. Service Excellence
c. Marketing Excellence

Qualified nominees are Filipino-owned companies with track record in exports for the past five (5) consecutive years (1999-2003) and have proven themselves to be good corporate citizens with sound financial standing. Past GSA winners may now be nominated for other categories of Excellence Awards.

2. RISING STAR CITATION

For introducing a relatively new product or service in the export market. Nominated companies must have at least 2 years export performance (2002-2003) for the nominated product/services and must meet any of the following basic criteria:

- Introduce an original design/ manufactured product in the export market
- Introduce a local product/service in the international market
- Product/service that has undergone improvement/new packaging or has used Innovative process or new technology
- Use of an indigenous material in a product for the first time.

3. EXPORT DEVELOPMENT CITATION

Award given to a Filipino, a project /program of a local or international organization/institution that has made a significant impact on the development of the Philippine export industry in general, or a specific export industry sector.

Trade associations, DTI offices, banks, and other related institutions may nominate qualified exporters. Self-nomination is not allowed. Deadline for nomination is **30 April 2004**. Please submit the attached nomination form to:

CITEM
THE GSA SECRETARIAT / Contact Persons: Ms. Rowena P. Ebriega /Ms. Bernadette Tan-Launte
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E-mail: gsa@citem.com.ph Website: www.citem.com.ph/gsa.htm
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Nomination Form

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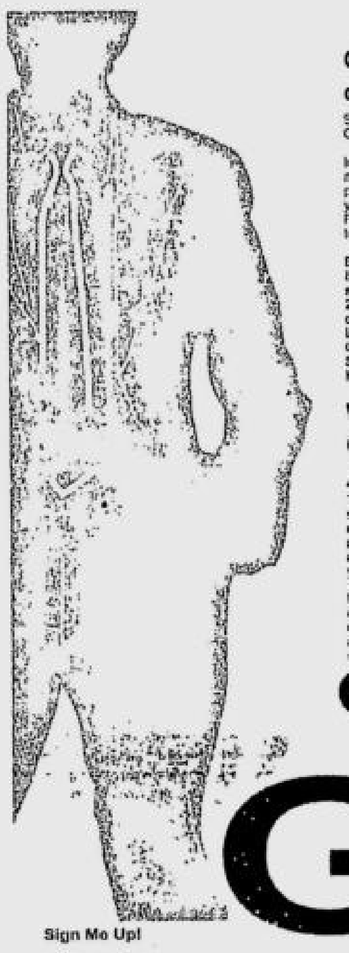

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Using tough benchmarks, Collins identified 11 companies that qualified as "great" and discovered the key determinants of greatness and the reasons others failed to be considered a great company

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3. "First Who, Then What"
4. Hiring Tips To Recruit Disciplined People
5. Making Filipino Cultural Traits Work For You

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Franco del Rosario
Speaker

Franco del Rosario is chairman of the 2004 Management Association of the Philippines Annual CEO Conference. He was chairman as well in 2003

MBA from Columbia University in New York. 12 years with New York & Florida offices of IBM Corp. 8 years with The Dole Company in California, Philippines, Nicaragua, Korea & Japan. Certified Dale Carnegie Instructor, Florida, U.S.A.

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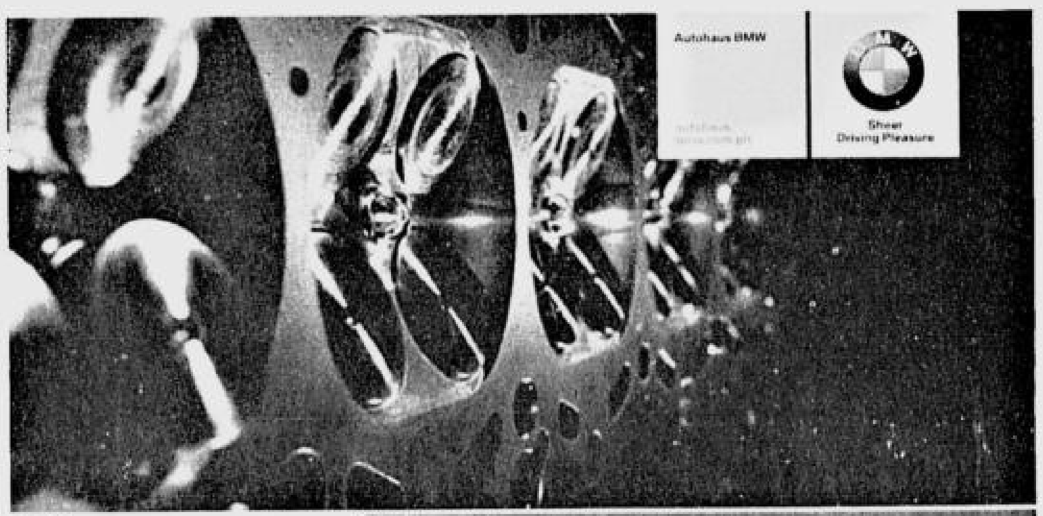

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Transco power delivery up 4%

By Abigail L. Ho

THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. (Transco) registered a four-percent increase in power delivery to the country's major electricity grids at 99,846 megawatt-month in 2003 from 96,104 MW-month the previous year.

Of the three major grids, Mindanao posted the highest growth in power deliveries at 10 percent to 13,184 MW-month from 11,983 MW-month in 2002, according to data from Transco's corporate planning group.

Most of the deliveries made in Mindanao last year went to major growth centers like Davao, Cagayan de Oro, General Santos and Zamboanga.

Over the last few years, the region's fishing, packing, canning and seafood processing industries have shown steady growth, prompting Transco to install additional power transformers to meet the increasing demand.

Transco upped its transmission capacity by 375 megavolt-ampere (MVA) via expansion works in its Lugait, Davao, Klinan, Tacurong and Butuan substations.

The Visayas grid also saw a 2.6-percent increase in power deliveries at 9,969 MW-month from 2002's 9,713 MW-month, with the installation of additional transformers in Transco's Bacolod and Wright, Eastern Samar substations.

The Luzon grid likewise posted a 3.1-percent growth in power deliveries from 74,407 MW-month in 2002 to 76,693 MW-month last year.

In terms of power source, 71 percent of Transco's electricity deliveries in Luzon came from state-run National Power Corp., 28 percent from Meralco's independent power producers (IPPs), and one percent from smaller IPPs.

Transco, which is using a different method to compute for revenues, reported a higher figure for power delivery in 2003 compared with the system peak.

Power delivery refers to the sum of Transco's twelve month billing demand in MW, while system peak refers to the highest level of demand at any given time for a particular year.

For 2003, the system peak was pegged at 8,204 MW.

Transco president Alan Ortiz said that the improvements in the national transmission lines allowed Transco to remain viable despite the sluggish economy and the uncertainty brought about by the coming May elections.

Transco posted a net income of P15.38 billion in 2003, up 12 percent from the previous year's P13.73 billion.

Napocor to come out with power plant study to guide investors

THE STATE-RUN National Power Corp. is currently conducting a study on baseload plants, the results of which will be used as an investment guide for potential investors interested in putting up new power plants in the country.

Napocor president and chief executive Rogelio Murga said in a statement that the study would focus on four priority sites: Isabela, Ilocos Norte, Cebu and South Cotabato.

The state firm is now looking for consultants for the engineering study who would provide insights on site selection, fuel supply, plant optimization, plant layout, plant design configurations, project cost estimates, and economic and financial evaluations, Murga said.

Earlier, the Department of Energy announced that two groups of investors had expressed interest in building two new baseload plants in Luzon and the Visayas, with capacities ranging from 200 megawatts (MW) to 450 MW.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. revealed that a consortium composed of several firms want to put up a 250-MW to 400-MW baseload power plant somewhere in Luzon.

Funding for the new plant, with a target commissioning of January 2008, would come from equity (70 percent) and from a foreign export crédit bank (30 percent).

For the 200-MW Visayas plant, an industry source revealed that Kepco Philippines Corp., a subsidiary of the Korea Electric Power Co., will be undertaking the project.

Perez said this plant, with a target commissioning of 2008, would be funded by the project proponent's internally generated cash.

A new plant in Mindanao, the Mindanao Coal Power Project, is also in the works, and is set to go commercial by 2006. The State Power Development Corp. is building the 200-MW coal-fired power plant in Misamis Oriental.

Abigail Ho

Megaworld cited as one of Asia's best run firms

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

RESIDENTIAL developer Megaworld Corp. was recently cited as one of Asia's best-managed companies, according to the Hong Kong-based Finance Asia magazine in its survey of top companies for 2004.

Megaworld joined the ranks of the country's best run firms, like Smart Communications Inc., Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co., Ayala Corp. and SM Prime Holdings.

Megaworld also ranked as one of the best in investor relations. Luke Tan, Megaworld director for investor relations, was named the country's second best investor relations representative.

Finance Asia grouped 424 fund managers, portfolio managers, equity investors and research analysts as respondents in a survey of companies from the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Korea, China and Indonesia.

More recently, Euromoney magazine voted Megaworld one of the best Asian companies in 2003, and one of the best Asian property companies, along with Sun Hung Kai Properties of Hong Kong and CapitaLand of Singapore.

Also in 2003, Megaworld ranked first among the Philippine companies in Euromoney's corporate governance survey of emerging markets.

Among Megaworld's major ventures this year is the planned P6-billion investment with Alliance Global Inc. in a residential project within the former Fort Bonifacio military reservation.

Sources said Megaworld will use its newly acquired six hectare property from the Bases Conversion Development Authority for its joint development project with AGI.

The project, to be called McKinley Hill, is a 25-hectare residential, commercial, institutional and mixed use complex that will be situated close to Forbes Park and Dasmariñas Village in Makati City.

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- 30GB HDD with Active Protection System
- 14.1" TFT Display
- M7-32MB VRAM Graphics Card
- DVD/CD-RW Combo Drive
- Integrated 56K modem/Ethernet LAN
- Standard 6-cell Li-Ion battery (approx. up to 5.0 hours)
- Embedded Security Subsystem 2.0
- 3-years international carry-in warranty

PHP 118,888.00† (23731FA)

IBM ThinkPad R50
(Best blend portability and essential features)
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
  - Intel® Pentium® M Processor 1.4GHz
  - Intel® PRO/Wireless Network Connection 802.11b
  - Intel® 855 Chipset Family
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- 256MB DDR SDRAM
- 40GB HDD
- 14.1" TFT Display
- DVD/CD-RW Combo Drive
- Integrated 56K modem/Ethernet LAN
- Standard 6-cell Li-Ion battery (up to 5.5 hours)
- 1-year international carry-in warranty

PHP 104,990.00† (1829I1A)

Customise yours:
- Upgrade up to 7.5 hours with optional ThinkPad T40 Series High Capacity 9-cell Li-Ion battery (08K8197) for PhP 10,995.00
- And get up to 9.5 hours with optional ThinkPad UltraBay Slim Li Polymer battery (08K8190) when combined with 9-cell battery for PhP 12,188.00

IBM ThinkPad X31
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
  - Intel® Pentium® M Processor 1.4GHz
  - Intel® PRO/Wireless Network Connection 802.11b
  - Intel® 855 Chipset Family
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- 256MB DDR SDRAM
- 30GB HDD
- 12.1" XGA TFT LCD Display
- 10/100 Mbps LAN
- 56K V.92 Data/Fax Modem
- Li-Ion Battery
- Carrying Case
- Weight 1.64 Kgs.

PHP 84,990.00† (2672I2A)

G & W clubshares

SEC License Broker No. A-17767
As of April 12, 2004

BEST BUYS

Alabang Country Club A	1,080,000
Alabang Country Club B	1,200,000
Baguio Country Club	660,000
Canlubang Golf	430,000
Manila Southwoods A	420,000
Sherwood A	60,000

FREE PLAYING RIGHTS
Ready to pay buyer of Cebu Country Club at P1,230,000

OTHER SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alta Vista	Pls. Call	-
Calatagan Golf	70,000	-
Camp John Hay	240,000	190,000
Capitol Hills	160,000	130,000
Club Filipino	-	120,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	280,000*	-
Eastridge A/B*	-	70,000/90,000*
Manila Golf Ind/Corp.*	-	9,500,000
Manila Polo	-	2,300,000
Makati Sports Club	200,000	Pls. Call
Metropolitan Club B	-	100,000
Mimosa C2/C3*	220,000	280,000*
Mimosa Golf Ind	180,000	120,000
Punta Fuego	-	450,000
Riviera Golf A/B*	120,000/160,000*	110,000*
Rockwell Leisure Club	290,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	Pls. Call	-
Spa & Lodge	700,000	500,000
Sta Elena A	-	1,100,000
Tagaytay Country Club	-	300,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf	810,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	660,000	-
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valley Golf & CC	280,000	-
Valle Verde Ind	150,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	6,700,000	6,400,000

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We have confirmed buyers for the following:

Alabang Country Club	1.0M
Canyon Woods	130K
Club Filipino	130K
Manila Polo Club	2.3M
Manila Southwoods "B"	550K
Manila Yacht Club	250K
Metro Club	120K
Punta Fuego	450K
Riviera Golf Club B	120K
Sta Elena Golf Club A	1.1M
Sta Elena Golf Club B	1.2M
SPA & Lodge	550K

We have available sellers as follows:

Alta Vista	350K
Alabang Country Club	1.1M
Baguio Country Club	650K
Celebrity Sports Club	170K
Eagle Ridge Golf Club A	230K
Eagle Ridge Golf Club B	290K
Manila Southwoods A	350K
Manila Golf Club - Ind.	10.2M
Makati Sports Club "A"	180K
Rockwell Club	280K
Sherwood Hills "B"	110K
Wack Wack Golf Club	7.2M

For other Club Shares requirement please call/inquire
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E-MAIL ADDRESS: fvrhi@info.com.ph

ACCORD CAPITAL
SEC License Broker #A20013392
clubshares
As of April 12, 2004

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Capitol Hills	-	180,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	170,000
Eagleridge "A"	-	270,000
Fairways & Blue Water "C1"	-	320,000
Fontana "D"	70,000	-
Forest Hills "A"	130,000	185,000
Forest Hills "B"	170,000	210,000
Manila Polo	2,200,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	250,00
Orchard "A"	-	165,000
Punta Fuego	400,000	-
Riviera "C"	180,000	-
Rockwell Club		320K/370K
Royale Tagaytay	-	70,000
Sherwoods "A"	-	100,000
Tagaytay Midlands	-	700,000
Tagaytay Country Club	310,000	380,000
Valle Verde	130,000	-
Wack Wack Golf Club	6,400,000	-

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Philippine Stock Exchange Center,
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GG & A Club Shares

SEC License Broker #007575 * As of April 12, 2004

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,000,000	1,200,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)		1,300,000
Baguio Country Club	600,000	650,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"		60,000
Camp John Hay		220,000
Canlubang		500,000
Canyonwoods		180,000
Capitol Hills	125,000	135,000
Cebu Country Club	1,100,000	Please Call
Celebrity Sports Club		170,000
Club Filipino	100,000	170,000
Eagleridge "A"	220,000	270,000
Eagleridge "B"	280,000	350,000
Eagleridge "C"		350,000
Forest Hills "A"		180,000
Forest Hills "B"		230,000
Forest Hills "C"		250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "B"		250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	10,500,000	-
Manila Golf (Individual)	9,500,000	10,400,000
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,500,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	350,000	430,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	500,000	550,000
Manila Yacht Club	250,000	400,000
Metroclub "A"	100,000	-
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	150,000	Please Call
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"		400,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	240,000	275,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"		330,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	200,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	70,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	180,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Spa & Lodge	-	600,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,175,000	1,400,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,400,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	180,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	300,000	330,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	600,000	670,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	150,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	170,000	Please Call
Valley Golf	230,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,500,000	6,700,000

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Pushing Asean forward

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

SIX YEARS ago, thirty years after the founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or Asean, the leaders of the member countries adopted Asean Vision 2020, painting in broad strokes the nature of cooperation and integration expected to be achieved among the members.

The vision described Asean as a concert of Southeast Asian nations, outward looking, living in peace, stability and prosperity, bonded together in partnership, in dynamic development, and in a community of caring societies. Beautiful words to describe the shared ideals of the peoples of this part of the world.

The agenda to flesh out the road map to this goal for the first six years was plotted out and adopted by the Asean leaders in Hanoi in 1999, thus called the Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA).

Nonetheless, at the end of his term as Asean secretary general, Ambassador Rodolfo Severino had been vocal in lamenting the group's sluggish pace. This is significant given that Asean is regarded as the most prominent regional grouping in the Asia-Pacific, which is widely regarded as the new focal point of the world in the 21st century.

Compared to the many other efforts at regional integration in various parts of the globe, Asean is seen by many as moving far too slowly to be the significant force in the global community and economy that it is widely expected to be in the years to come.

More than Afta

While Asean in its early beginnings was primarily a political union, it is now more widely known for its efforts at economic integration, particularly in the establishment of the Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA) starting in 1992.

Here, the member countries—initially numbering five (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand), then six with the addition of Brunei, and now ten with the subsequent entry of the so-called CMLV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam)—have agreed to bring down import tariffs on most products to between 0 and 5 percent among themselves.

But the road to achieving this has been a tortuous one, with some countries more forthcoming while others are reluctant. The CMLV countries were given more time to achieve the final rates. For the Asean-6 (i.e. the original five plus Brunei), the phase down was completed at the start of this year, with few remaining product exceptions left.

But as Asean gears up for the new century, and especially in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis and of the 9/11 attacks, cooperation in the region is recognized to necessarily include many other dimensions of the member countries' concerns.

Stumbling blocks

Thus, apart from economic cooperation and integration, the HPA also addresses efforts to enhance joint pursuit of science and technology development, social and cultural development, environmental protection and sustainable development, and promotion of peace and security.

The HPA spelled out a long list of specific initiatives and projects in pursuit of these various concerns. Now nearing the completion of the HPA's six-year time frame, we in the Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development (Acerd) have been engaged by the Asean Secretariat in Jakarta to assist in the evaluation of the implementation of the HPA.

According to our preliminary assessment, the data indicate lack of progress on many elements of the HPA—the very reason for Ambassador Severino's frustration, and most other observers' perception that Asean has not been moving fast enough compared to other similar regional groupings.

To begin with, the HPA was too ambitious in the amount of detailed initiatives and projects it contained, most of which had no clear sources of funding support at the outset. It was, in the words of many we interviewed, more of a "wish list" than a coherent plan of action.

Meager funds

Given Asean's meager funds (member countries contribute equal amounts to the annual budget regardless of the level of economic development, which is a problem in itself), the bulk of the initiatives must rely on external funding coming from the group's so-called "dialog partners." These are the richer countries with which we Asean members trade and on whom we depend for development assistance.

Thus, most of the initiatives and projects listed in the HPA remain unimplemented for one common reason: lack of funding.

But the other commonly cited reason for slow progress is a familiar phrase for us in the Philippines: lack of political will on the part of individual member governments. This relates directly with another fundamental problem with the Asean, which is the lack of a mechanism to firmly ensure compliance by the member countries to agreed commitments, whether in the area of policy reforms, or in implementing specific initiatives or projects.

There remains to be no strong dispute settlement mechanism to address cases when specific members may feel aggrieved by actions (or lack of it) by another member. In true Asian fashion, the members would rather smile and look politely the other way when some members do not live up to (translation: violate) certain commitments. This is exemplified in the group's "policy of non-interference" in each other's affairs.

CMLP, not CMLV

Thus, Asean can only move at the pace of its slowest member. What is embarrassing to us Filipinos is that there is now a joke going around in Asean circles that CMLV has now been replaced by CMLP—with Vietnam now being recognized as being more economically dynamic and aggressive than the Philippines, which has now replaced it in the acronym for the four slowest members.

Our government representatives to the high-level Asean meetings, in particular, have lately been known to be constantly pulling back and even backtracking on earlier commitments, especially in the area of closer economic integration, and not exactly earning the admiration of their Asean colleagues in the process.

We are, fortunately, ably represented in the Asean Secretariat in Jakarta, by a number of very competent Filipinos making their mark in setting the tone for Asean's work—Deputy Secretary General Wilfredo Villacorta, and professionals like Ramonette Serafica, Aladin Rillo and Anna Robeniol. They provide quiet leadership in fleshing out Asean's vision in the years ahead.

It is people like them who make the CMLP acronym inappropriate.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

DOE issues IRR on coco diesel use

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy has come out with the implementing rules and regulations for the use of coco diesel, which is seen to mitigate pollution caused by vehicle emissions while propping up the local coconut industry.

These rules, the DOE said in a statement, would outline the roles of various government agencies in implementing the National CME (coco methyl ester)-Diesel Program under Malacañang's Memorandum Circular 55.

Under the IRR, or Department Circular 2004-04-003, the first phase of the CME-Diesel program's implementation would involve the mandate that all government offices should use CME-Diesel for one percent of its diesel requirements.

To help encourage the manufacture, sale and use of the product, the DOE, other government agencies, the private sector and the academe would be preparing a strategic plan for the CME-Diesel program.

The working group will do the following tasks to come up with the strategic plan:

- Conduct field tests and evaluate CME-related research and activities of research and development institutions;
- Evaluate the effects of CME on engines and fuel systems, including engine performance, emissions, safety and economics;
- Formulate procedures and methodologies for monitoring emissions and operational performance;
- Formulate safety standards in the storage, transport, handling, packaging and use of CME products;
- Conduct information, education and communication activities to promote public awareness; and,
- Identify and address the concerns of stakeholders in the CME program.

The IRR also tasks the Department of Finance to develop and recommend fiscal and non-fiscal incentives for petroleum and oleochemical companies participating in the program.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will will provide direct assistance to the DOE and other agencies in monitoring, testing and evaluating the emission of vehicles using the coconut-based product.

To ensure sufficient supply of CME, the Philippine Coconut Authority has been mandated to undertake an "aggressive" program for the coconut industry.

The National CME-Diesel Program is seen to create a new market for the country's 3.5 million coconut farmers.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of April 6, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	103,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	47	47.5	47	47	663,200
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	2,200
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	40.5	41	40.5	41	210,900
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	23.75	24	23.75	24	284,300
Philippine National Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	300
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	10,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	2,000
Security Bank Corp.	16.75	17	16.75	17	15,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	140,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2200	2200	2200	2200	120
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	30,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	135	135	135	135	200
Sun Life Financial Inc	1570	1580	1570	1580	1,520
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21.5	22.25	21.5	22.25	20,500
Diversified Fin. Network	3	3	3	3	5,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.65	0.67	0.65	0.67	320,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	875	905	875	900	116,340
Ipeople Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	138,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.043	0.04	0.043	2,100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.037	0.034	0.037	3,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.78	1.78	12,276,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1025	1055	1025	1055	284,780
Ivantage Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	50,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	11,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	18	18.75	18	18.75	113,300
Manila Electric Co. B	27.5	28.5	27.5	28	1,146,700
Petron Corp.	3.1	3.15	3	3.1	9,799,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.22	2.38	2.22	2.38	70,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	1	0.95	1	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.95	3.05	2.95	3	138,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	50,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	53,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.54	1.56	1.54	1.56	1,340,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	42,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	5,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18.75	19	18.75	19	742,700
RFM Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	110,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57.5	57	57.5	160,700
San Miguel Corp. B	71	72	71	71.5	116,700
Universal Robina Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	25,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	630,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.4	2,282,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	134,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1	1	1	1	50,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.5	40,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp	0.53	0.54	0.52	0.53	4,070,000
Basic Consolidated Inc	0.1	0.12	0.1	0.12	500,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	550,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	400,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.022	0.028	0.022	0.028	1,300,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1	1	1	290,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	22.25	23	21.75	23	590,500
Ionics Inc	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	102,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	128,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	30,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.12	1.18	1.1	1.18	10,251,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	3,830,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	5,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	40,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	50,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.5	15	14.5	15	31,800
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	700,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	540,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.12	1.2	1.12	1.16	644,000
Pryce Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	140,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	700,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.26	0.23	0.26	150,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	22	22.75	22	22.5	298,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6	6	6	6	47,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.6	7,498,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.205	0.215	0.205	0.21	2,240,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.08	1.1	1.06	1.06	3,989,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.185	0.185	0.18	0.185	480,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	110,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc	6	6	5.9	6	8,638,000
MINING					
Benguet Corp. B	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	200,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	200,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	50,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	30,000,000

BOP seen . . .

From page B1

Transactions that result in the receipt of foreign currencies such as exportation or foreign investments inflow, are surplus items.

The country incurred a BOP deficit of $822 million from January to February this year, as meager foreign exchange inflows were wiped out by heavy outflows from debt servicing.

The country's gross international reserves recovered to $16.31 billion as of end-March this year or 3.6 percent better than the $15.76 billion build-up as of end-February.

Buenaventura said the end-March GIR level was adequate to cover 4.5 months of imports of goods and payments of services and income. Using other reserve coverage measures, he added this level as equivalent to 2.7 times the country's short-term debt based on original maturity and 1.4 times based on residual maturity. *Doris Dumlao*

Currencies

April 11, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.832154	1.000000	56.3060
Japan	Yen	0.007930	0.009530	0.5366
United Kingdom	Pound	1.515603	1.821300	102.5501
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106844	0.128394	7.2294
Switzerland	Franc	0.638058	0.766754	43.1729
Canada	Dollar	0.633588	0.761383	42.8704
Singapore	Dollar	0.495477	0.595415	33.5254
Australia	Dollar	0.626528	0.752899	42.3927
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.207424	2.652661	149.3607
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.221908	0.266667	15.0150
Brunei	Dollar	0.494007	0.593648	33.4259
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000097	0.000116	0.0065
Thailand	Baht	0.021294	0.025589	1.4408
UAE	Dirham	0.226596	0.272301	15.3322
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.201700	67.6629
Argentina	Peso	0.292240	0.351185	19.7738
Brazil	REAL	0.289043	0.347343	19.5575
Denmark	Kroner	0.134318	0.161410	9.0884
India	Rupee	0.019100	0.022952	1.2923
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219017	0.263193	14.8193
Mexico	New Peso	0.074686	0.089750	5.0535
New Zealand	Dollar	0.540395	0.649393	36.5647
Norway	Kroner	0.119617	0.143744	8.0936
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014574	0.017513	0.9861
South Africa	Rand	0.130415	0.156720	8.8243
Korea	Won	0.000729	0.000876	0.0493
Sweden	Kroner	0.108808	0.130755	7.3623
Syria	Pound	0.016111	0.019361	1.0901
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025378	0.030497	1.7172
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000434	0.000522	0.0294

Billions in revenue lost to illegal land title transfers

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT may be losing billions in revenue from unscrupulous transactions involving the transfer of land titles without the payment of proper taxes.

A ranking government official issued the warning, urging authorities to look into the operations of syndicates who work for the transfer of land titles without going through the required process of paying taxes to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The government source said that the syndicate members are in cahoots with officials from the Land Registration Authority who expedite the transfer of land titles without paying taxes.

"The government is losing so much revenue out of these illegal activities," said the government source who asked not to be named. "Certificates of land transfers are being issued by the LRA (Land Registration Authority) despite the absence of required documents, such as authority to register."

The government source explained that before a land title could be transferred from one owner to another, the parties involved should first secure from the BIR a certificate of authority to register. The certificate is issued by the revenue agency upon payment of taxes and fees.

Taxes required for the issuance of the certificate of authority to register include documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax, value-added tax and transfer fees.

"The government loses all the revenue from these taxes when the LRA certifies the transfer of land titles even without an authority from the BIR," said the official.

The BIR and the LRA earlier signed a memorandum of agreement to work on the plugging of the tax leaks resulting from the non-payment of taxes imposed on land title transfers.

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Cautious trading seen

From page B1

Also adding to the positive sentiment is the better-than-expected inflation numbers reported last week which reinforced views that prices are still kept in check. The country's consumer price index accelerated 3.8 percent in March, from 3.4 percent the previous month, the National Statistics Office announced.

Even with the stimuli, market players may still assess whether to take profits depending on certain developments.

"Local and institutional players might start the week on cautious note, depending on the trail of events during the Lenten break. However, we expect bargain hunters to seize on technical weaknesses to position in stocks that are likely to stay resilient during a volatile second quarter stretch. So far, consensus is up that much of March's higher inflation figure has been factored at the bourse and lack of alternative investment channels might prod players to look for trading opportunities in equities," Grace Cerdenia of online brokerage 2TradeAsia.com wrote in her weekly outlook.

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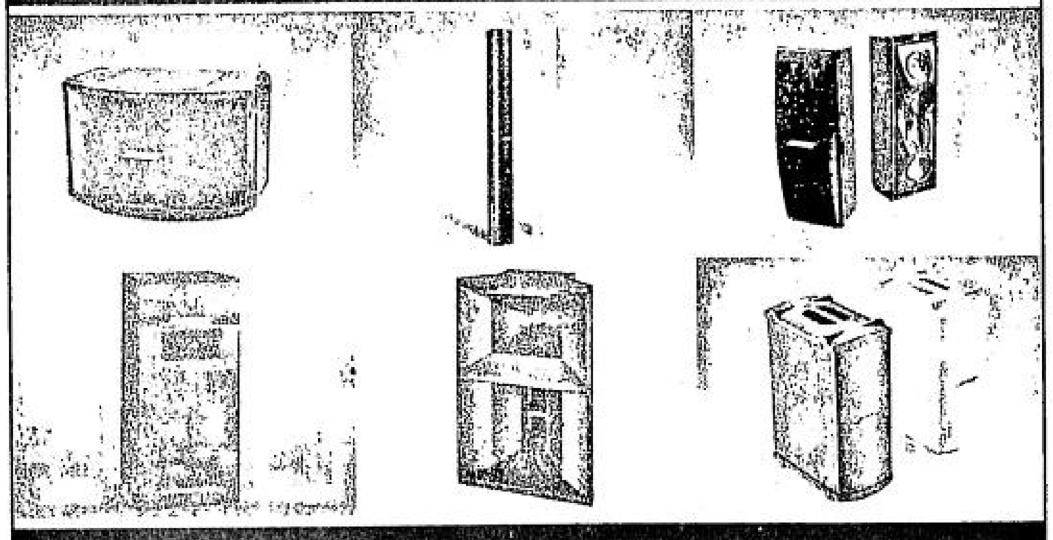

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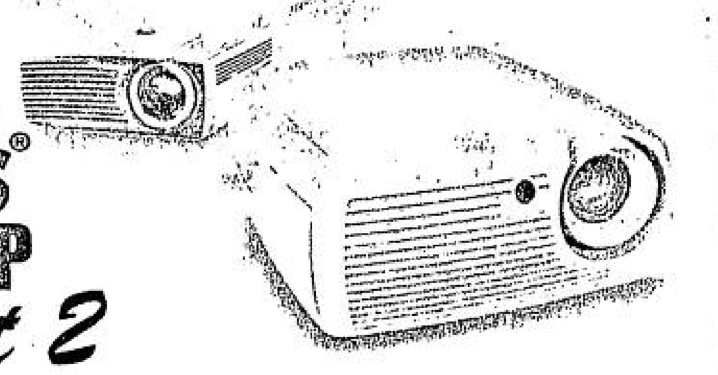

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Nurturing Love for Reading

The country's leading foreign bank makes meaningful contribution to help schoolchildren develop love for reading

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"The transformation is certainly enough to make anyone cry," relates Nina Aguas, Citibank's Country Business Manager for Global Consumer Group, and the driving force behind the project.

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Located along Tandang Sora Avenue, OBES has a student population of 3,556. With only 26 classrooms, the school was forced to implement a 3-shift class schedule where some students report to class from 6 in the morning until 10, the others are assigned from 10 in the morning to 2 in the afternoon, and the rest have to attend classes from 2 in the afternoon to 6 in the evening.

Typical of public schools in the metropolis, the school suffers from a severe lack of supplementary reading materials. It has no real library for students to go to, but only a makeshift one that is poorly ventilated and used mostly for storage of textbooks. To make things worse, it has a disproportionate 1:55 teacher-to-student ratio, which would partly explain why it reported a big number of non-readers and slow readers among its grades 1 to 3 students.

"Left unchecked, these students may drop out of school, or worse become underachievers. At their young age, it's too soon for them to give up," explains Citibank Marketing Director Cecille Fonacier.

To address this alarming situation, Citibank tied up with Save the Children, an international non-governmental organization that has been working with disadvantaged and underserved communities in the Philippines for over two decades now. Save the Children has just recently implemented a reading intermediation program in two other public schools—tackling the same problem—and both met with success.

And so I Love To Read was born. With funding from Citigroup Foundation based in New York, Citibank and Save the Children took on the task of educating the students.

"Our mission was simple: we wanted to instill the love of reading in these children. Reading after all is such an essential skill to learning and so we feel we need to invest in this most basic skill," adds Fonacier.

Upon enrollment to the program, the students were given a home reading kit to be able to practice their reading skills at home. Each reading kit contained flash cards, reading booklets, magnetic letters, writing pads and pencils to aid the student and his home reading partner, which could be his parent or an older sibling, get started on the road to learning. The students were expected to spend at least one hour each day to develop and hone their reading skills.

The students were also given access to mobile libraries boasting of over 120 titles. There were 10 students assigned to every mobile library giving them all ample opportunity to finish reading all titles over the last four months.

> 'At Citibank, we encourage our people to get involved in our community projects by giving their time and talent because we know ultimately we are made richer by these experiences,' says Country Business Manager Nina Aguas. More than 80 Citibankers signed up to teach students for weekend sessions that ran for 16 Saturdays. But first, they underwent training to be effective teaching assistants.

On Saturdays, the students looked forward to weekend reading sessions for their group learning activity. With games, puzzles and story telling sessions, the students are guaranteed to have fun while learning to read. Joining the students in this activity are volunteers from the community, as well as from Citibank's ranks of officers and staff.

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When Bankers Become Teachers

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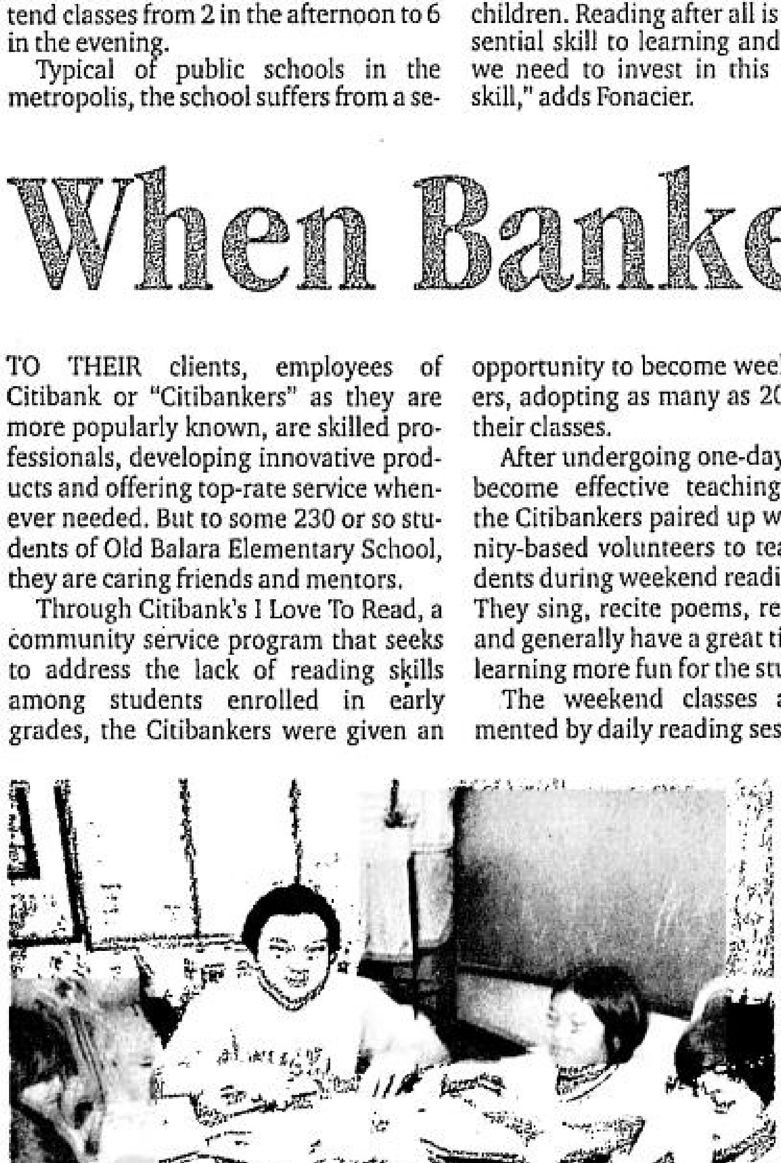

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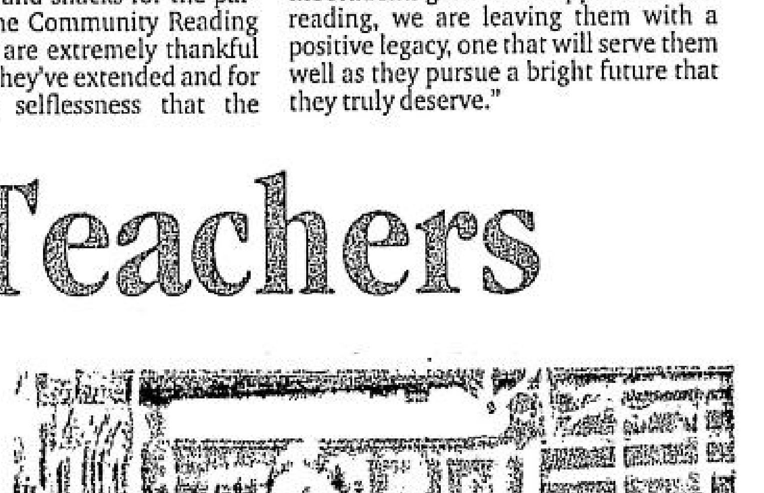

CITIBANK'S Annette Aguila walks to class with her weekend charges.

Technology Manager Arlene Magkasi says she volunteered because it involved kids and books, which are two of her interests. "Working with the kids made me realize how fortunate I am to have had the childhood that I had and also made me see the need to share with others."

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I LOVE TO READ!

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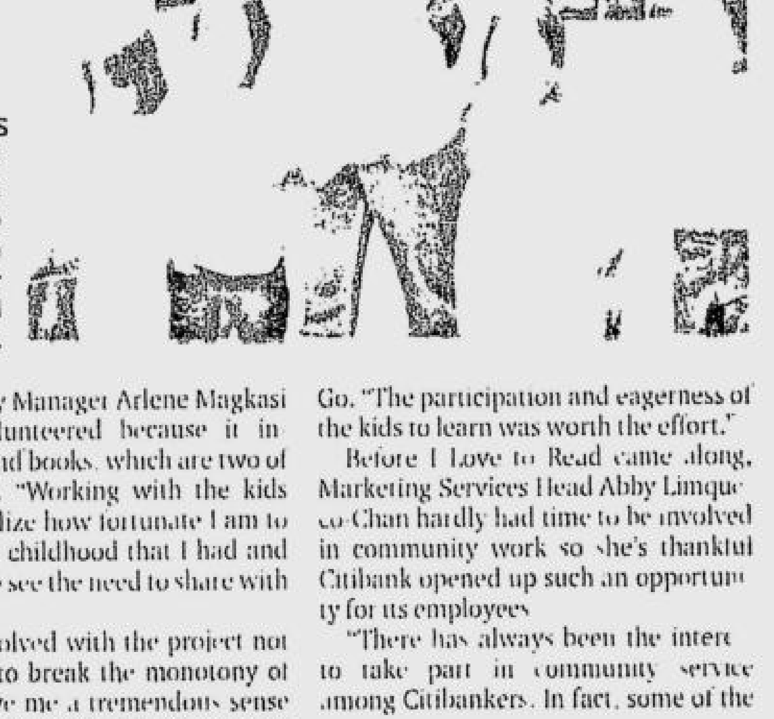

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BANKERS B9

When Bankers . . .

From page B8

departments within the bank would take on their own project, say a book drive, or sponsor students through school, to fill that need. So when I Love To Read came along, we didn't lack for volunteers," recalls Chan.

As the program winds down, Chan says she and the other volunteers are gratified to note a marked improvement in the children's reading skills. "The assessment report, administered by our NGO partner Save the Children, reveals that there's a 75 to 80-percent progress in the reading skills of the children and this is indeed very encouraging and rewarding," says Chan.

With Citibank's strong sense of social responsibility and the dedication and selflessness of these Citibankers, the students of OBES can look forward to a bright future as they begin to appreciate their newfound reading skills. As Magkasi puts it, "If you have enough, sharing becomes not just an option, but a responsibility."

And it is responsibility that Citibank and its employees are more than willing to take on.

OLD BALARA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
140,000
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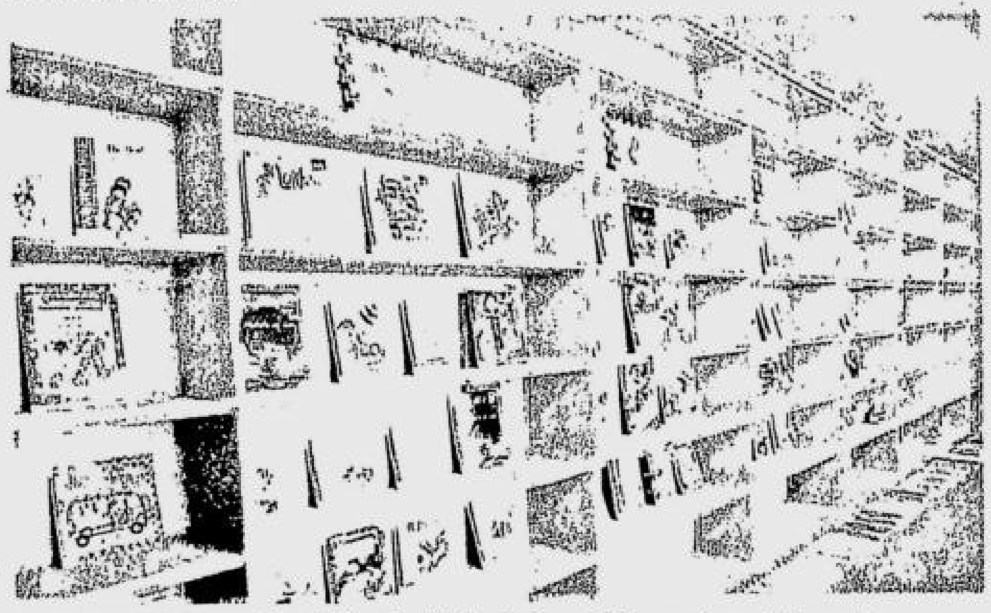
CITIBANK Country Business Manager for Global Consumer Group Nina Aguas (leftmost) turns over check donation to Old Balara Elementary School Principal Pacita Manga (center) for conversion of two classrooms to a library. With them is Ces Ochoa of Save the Children.



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Teaching micro-lenders the way of global banking

By Nina D. Aguas

"GIVE a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish and you feed him for life."

In May 2001, the regional Grameen Microfinance Forum was held in Manila, giving officers of Citibank Philippines the unique opportunity to participate in the two-day conference.

It was here that our eyes were opened to the special significance microfinance institutions (MFIs) play in helping people escape poverty. By making loans available to the marginalized sector, MFIs are empowering them to pursue their dreams and work towards improving their lives with livelihood projects or education.

Over the next two days, we saw for ourselves the many challenges MFIs faced. And yet, interestingly, despite the many hardships, they can also share scores of success stories.

While the Philippines is host to one of the largest and most successful networks of MFIs in the region, there is still a lot of room to grow. By the end of the conference, we resolved to look for ways on how we can contribute to the further development of MFIs in the country.

We did not want to simply make a donation. We have been doing that as an institution for many years now, and while we expect to continue doing so, we wanted to look for other means by which we can help our colleagues in the microfinance industry.

Searching for the more lasting means to help MFIs, we stumbled on the idea of conducting training for their officers. By providing them with the skills to better manage their organizations, we will be able to help them achieve a higher level of success.

Over the years, Citibank has enjoyed many successes because of its professionally run organization and people who have access to quality training year-round. Clearly, this was one "donation" we will make that will go a long way towards improving the situation of MFIs because it would be imbibed in the lives of participants.

Towards this end, the Microfinance Management Development Program came into existence. Launched in November of the same year, the program targeted various MFIs with the aim to empower and improve the management skills of its officers.

The first workshop drew 20 participants from 14 MFIs from all over the Philippines. Most of the participants were managers with experience varying from 1 to 13 years. The course focused on the following: leadership and self-awareness, communication, the microfinance performance management cycle, getting commitment to action, coaching for improved performance, appraising for results, and motivating for peak performance.

Since then, we've held three other workshops, each time introducing a new course: Introduction to Quality for Micro-finance Institutions, Micro-finance Credit and Risk Workshop and Micro-marketing for Micro-finance Institutions. Participants came from the following micro-finance institutions: TSPI, NWTF, CARD, VEF, PVFC, ASHI, ARDCI, PEDF, MILAMDEC and PHILNET.

The trainers, all Citibank senior officers, were successful in instilling in the participants the principles of each of their programs while maintaining a warm, easy atmosphere that further enhanced learning and advocated open conversation among the attendees and the formation of new friendships. The participants were openly pleased to have been included in the training and found the entire training program very relevant to their field of expertise.

The methodology used, experiential learning through in-basket exercises, case studies, group dynamics and lectures, was very effective. The participants were keen to stress that training sessions such as these should be duplicated and offered to other MFIs in other areas around the Philippines for the purpose of improving the overall standard of their industry. The participants lauded the trainers themselves with their boundless compliments and heartfelt appreciation for their time and efforts.

For an internationally acclaimed establishment such as Citibank to service the community in this particular manner is quite an achievement. It is proving itself to be an organization concerned not only with its own development, but with continuously improving the standard of life of the community as a whole.

With years of having provided excellent service to clients under its belt and taking on training assignments of this type and magnitude, Citibank continues to confirm that it is truly a power to be reckoned with.

(*The author is the Country Business Manager of Citibank's Global Consumer Group in the country*).

GRADE 3 student Bon Jovi Roldan could hardly read sentences and struggled with simple three-letter words at the start of the program. Today, he grabs at every opportunity to read books, and is also more socially active.

Finding hope in the eyes of a child

HOPE in their eyes - Some of the participants in 'I Love to Read'

AT OLD Balara Elementary School, teachers are faced with a number of challenges— from accommodating over 3,500 students with only 26 classrooms and struggling with a 1:55 teacher to student ratio. This would probably explain the growing number of slow and non-readers among its students in the early grades.

Take the case of Bon Jovi, a grade 3 student that was having a hard time coping with his schoolwork. The first time Tere de Jesus, Project Officer with NGO Save the Children, met the boy, her heart went out to him.

"He would just sit in one corner, would not respond when a teacher greets him and refuses to play with other students. And yet, when you look in his eyes, you can see that 'knowing' look that somehow hints at the boy's untapped potential as a student," recalls de Jesus.

Bon Jovi was brought to de Jesus' attention by one of his teachers who learned that the former will be implementing a reading intermediation program in the school. Dubbed I Love To Read, program sponsor Citibank tied up with Save the Children to run it in the school under de Jesus' supervision.

Given enough attention, de Jesus was confident Bon Jovi could learn to read. And so she made up her mind to convince the boy's parents to commit to spending one-hour weekly sessions at home to teach the boy—a prerequisite to enrollment to I Love To Read.

"With so many students that should be part of the program, we wanted to make sure that we have the support of the parents. If they won't help, then we are better off focusing our time and resources to those that will cooperate," de Jesus explains.

But, as de Jesus soon found out, getting in touch with the boy's parents was quite a challenge. First, de Jesus went to the boy's house to talk to his mother. But she was never home. His mother, she learned from the *barangay*, is a street sweeper. Several times, de Jesus would go to her assigned area only to be told that the lady has left. When she finally caught up with her, de Jesus found out that, after sweeping the area assigned to her, the mother would pitch-in for sweepers who are absent just so she could earn extra income. She is the family's sole breadwinner.

De Jesus explained Bon Jovi's situation to the mother. At first, she was non-committal. For someone who spends almost all her waking hours sweeping the streets just to earn enough to feed an entire family, attending an orientation session on how to help your child learn to read could be the least of your priorities.

This, says de Jesus, is one of the stumbling blocks they have had to deal with. "Most parents are so busy trying to earn a living, they don't have time to teach their kids at home. But parental participation is very important, especially for children who require special attention."

In fact, Bon Jovi's situation is similar to those of many gradeschoolers in public elementary schools all over the country. Most parents regard their children's schooling as secondary to survival, to earning a living. It is a sad fact that some parents whose children were diagnosed with poor reading skills, refused to send their kids to the reading sessions because they needed the extra hand during weekends, especially since a number of parents are market vendors.

Thus, the problem isn't addressed. Eventually, these poor-performing kids stop going to school altogether, since research shows that students who perform poorly have a higher tendency to drop out of school. And so many of them end up continuing the vicious cycle, living a life similar to their parent's.

But to de Jesus' surprise, Bon Jovi's mother turned up at the orientation session. She also committed to spending at least one hour coaching Bon Jovi at home.

Like most of the children who have completed Citibank's I Love To Read, today Bon Jovi shows a marked improvement in his reading skills. His self-confidence has also improved dramatically. He now plays around with his classmates, smiles a lot and even goes out of his way to greet his teachers.

More importantly, he can now read short stories and has developed a love for reading, which is a very important element for learning.

"Most of the students who participated in the "I Love to Read" program have shown a dramatic improvement in their reading and comprehension skills," says de Jesus. This, she stresses, only shows that learning requires a home-school collaboration. "We're very thankful to Citibank for providing the venue for teachers, community workers, parents and its employees to come together to teach and help our children develop the love for reading."

ELEMENTAR
OLD

FROM slow readers to achievers: Judy Anne Oda with Citibank's Aneth Lim, project manager of I Love to Read, and Maria Teresa Sarmiento reciting a poem during the Recognition rites.

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Amcham urges gov't to lift ownership limits

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE AMERICAN Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines called on the government and Congress to remove limits on foreign investments and adopt bolder measures to liberalize the economy.

The Amcham said in a statement that it lamented the issuance of the "Foreign Investment Negative Lists," which identifies businesses where foreign capital is restricted or prohibited.

The group explained that under the Foreign Investment Act of 1991, many local businesses were opened up to full foreign ownership and the National Economic and Development Authority was required to update the negative list every two years.

Existing laws still restrict foreign firms' involvement in advertising, agriculture, financial services, fisheries, land ownership, media, natural resources, public utilities, professions and retail trade.

The latest of the negative lists was issued in October 2002 through Executive Order No. 129.

"Unfortunately, each successive negative list has differed little from its predecessor," the Amcham said.

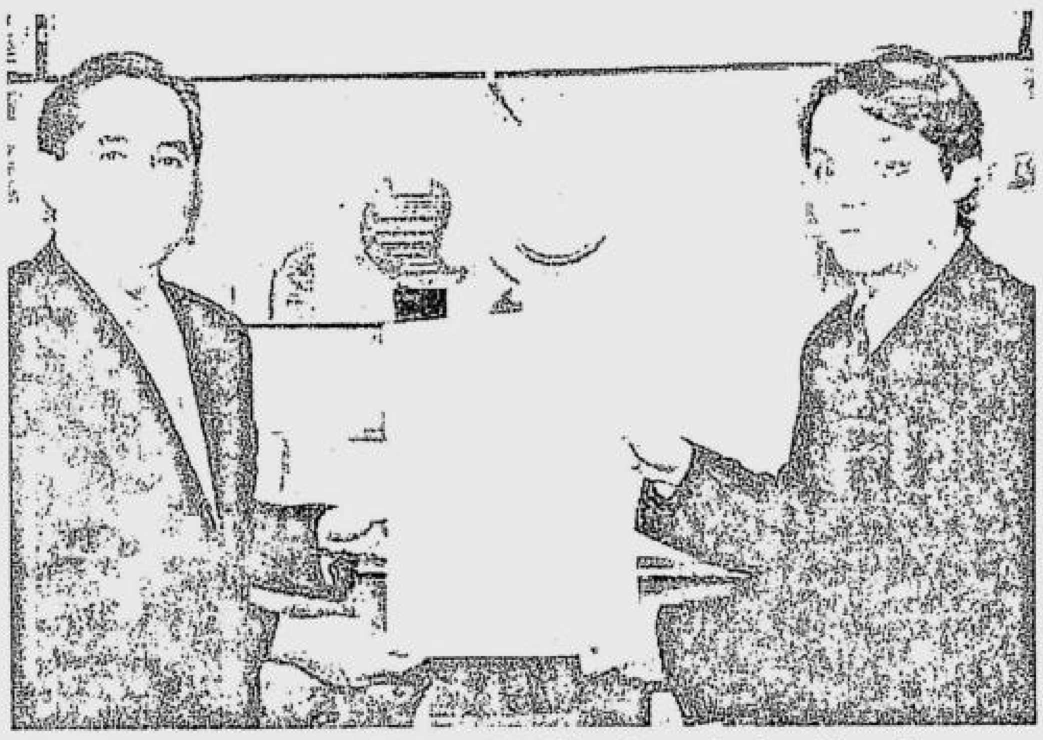
The group added: "It has been more than a decade since the negative list was introduced in the Philippines. (The laws) should be reviewed and liberalized as much as possible."

Minimum capital required under existing laws could be sharply reduced, it added.

"There are still significant impediments to investment and to the adoption of technology that are slowing progress in the Philippines," the Amcham added.

The Amcham added that while the negative list had changed little in the last 10 years, globalization and the emerging Free Trade Area linking 1.7 billion Asian consumers into the world's largest FTA posed opportunities for a more open economy.

"The negative list should be made more positive," it said.



GLOBE Telecom president and CEO, Gerardo C. Ablaza Jr., receives from Marcus H. Langston, senior manager of Euromoney Publications, the "Best Managed Telecom Company in the Philippines" certificate, based on the results of the magazine's Best Asian Companies Poll for 2003. Euromoney's eighth Asian Company ranking is based on a survey of market analysts at major banks and research institutes in Asia.

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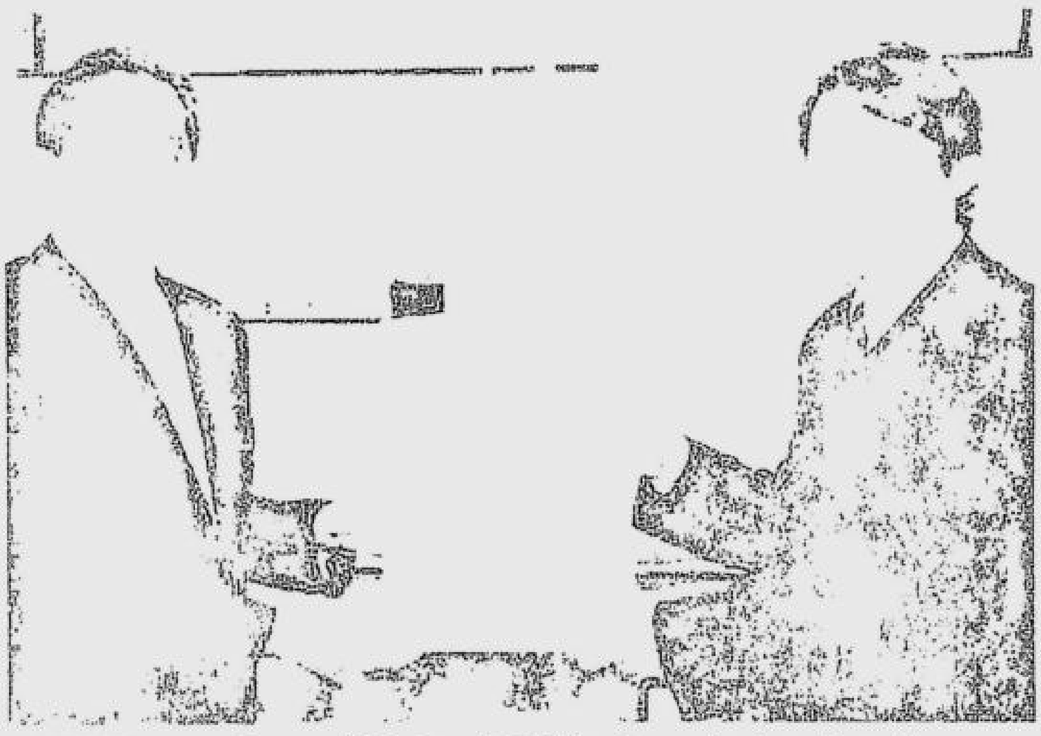

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Northrail starts $503-M project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NORTH Luzon Railways Corp. last week started the $503-million North Rail Transit project.

Northrail president Jose L. Cortes Jr. said Phase I Section I of the project spans 32.2 kilometers from Caloocan to Malolos, where six stations would be put up in Caloocan, Malabon, Valenzuela (main depot), Bocaue, Marilao and Malolos.

Cortes said that the railway, which would eventually reach up to Ilocos region, would provide the country with its first double track system.

"This will result in simultaneous rail operations in both the north and south-bound tracks," he said.

The project also includes reviving the Philippine National Railway (PNR) Main Line North which has been mothballed for more than 25 years.

The Northrail will have a diesel powered-train capable of running at a top speed of 120 km per hour but will cruise at speeds of between 80 kph and 100 kph.

Maximum travel time from Caloocan to Malolos will be 45 minutes compared to buses that take an average of 145 minutes to ply the same route.

Cortes said the initial fare rate will be P10 boarding fare plus P1 for every kilometer for a total fare of P42 from Caloocan to Malolos.

"This is very much cheaper than other land-based transportation averaging P70," the official said.

He added that at the start of Northrail's operations, passengers would be able to interconnect with the Southrail and eventually with LRT-1 and MRT-3 without having to get out of the common terminal in Caloocan.

Cortes said that of the $503 million project cost, $421 million will be funded by the government of the People's Republic of China through the Export-Import Bank of China.

The Northrail project is expected to be completed by 2007.

2003 ESTIMATE

LGU budget surplus down

By Michelle V. Remo

THE SURPLUS in the budget of local government units (LGUs) shrunk by more than half in 2003 due to higher expenditure.

Preliminary data from the Department of Finance showed that the budget surplus of LGUs declined by 59 percent to P7.864 billion from P18.93 billion the previous year.

Revenue generated by LGUs stood at P169.83 billion from only P159.77 billion the previous year.

The growth in revenue, however, was offset by the 15-percent rise in expenditure.

LGUs' expenditure for 2003 rose to P161.96 billion from P140.838 billion the previous year.

The bulk of the LGUs' revenue came from taxes on real property, contributing P20.25 billion, followed by business tax, contributing P17.15 billion.

Loans borrowed by LGUs rose to P2.046 billion from P1.412 billion. Non-tax revenue, such as regulatory fees and services charges among others, also rose to P12.756 billion from P11.136 billion.

Grants both from domestic and foreign sources, on the other hand, declined to P356.7 million from P357.4 million.

On the expenditure side, LGUs spent the most on general public services, which accounted for about P67 billion of their total expenses for the year.

This was higher than the P58 billion spent on the same in 2002.

Expenditure for education and manpower development increased to P10.57 billion from only P9.19 billion in 2002. Expenditure for health, nutrition and population control likewise increased to P18.97 billion from P16.499 billion.

Despite the budget surplus posted by the country's LGUs, the consolidated public sector debt for 2003 rose to its highest level of P244.59 billion.

The 2003 consolidated public sector deficit was 11 percent higher than the P218.718 billion in 2002.

The higher deficit of the country's public sector was largely attributed to the higher budget gap incurred by government-owned and -controlled corporations.

Among the GOCCs included in the computation of the consolidated public sector debt are the National Power Corp. (Napocor) and the Philippine National Oil Co.

RP to import 190,000T rice

THE PHILIPPINES will seek tenders on May 4 to buy up to 190,000 tons of rice originating from Thailand, Vietnam, China, or the United States, a senior official said last week.

The fresh requirement would bring to 650,000 tons the total volume sought by the Philippines, one of Asia's largest rice buyers, since February this year.

Gregorio Tan, deputy administrator of the National Food Authority, said his agency had planned to seek fresh tenders of just 140,000 tons but raised it to 190,000 tons because suppliers that won the February tender are not expected to deliver their maximum volume commitments.

In February, the NFA awarded to mostly Vietnamese firms the supply of a maximum 460,000 tons of rice for March to June deliveries.

"We expect suppliers in the February tender to just deliver 415,000 tons instead of 460,000 tons as prices have moved up," Tan said.

Tan said that under the terms of the February tender, suppliers could either deliver 10 percent more or 10 percent less of the volume awarded to them.

Vietnamese suppliers rejected this month the NFA's proposal that they supply the bulk of its fresh requirement at the same terms and prices as the February tender.

NFA officials said the suppliers in the February tender declined their proposal because prices have gone up by $15 to $25 per ton C&F.

Vietnamese suppliers sold 25 percent broken rice to the NFA in February at $228.20 per ton C&F to $228.50 per ton and 15 percent broken rice at $230 per ton for March to June deliveries.

Two trading firms also sold 25 percent broken variety to the NFA last month at $227.74 per ton C&F and $227.35 per ton.

The Vietnamese suppliers won the tender to supply 410,000 tons, while two trading firms—Toepfer International Asia and Noble Grain Pte Ltd.—won the tender to supply up to 50,000 tons.

The Philippines has estimated its rice shortfall this year would reach between 810,000 tons and 945,000 tons.

It has allowed local farmers' groups to import as much as 310,000 tons this year as part of Manila's program to dismantle the NFA's rice import monopoly.

The country imported 934,000 tons in 2003, including 22,000 tons given by the US government and 37,000 tons extended by Washington under a commodity loan.

Reuters

Solar lights up rural Mindanao

SOLAR electricity is now available to 72 barrios in Mindanao.

This thanks to Solar Electric Co. which provided electricity to 36 barangays in rural areas of Mindanao.

Electricity was provided to 17 barangays in Tawi-Tawi, 13 in Tongkil, Sulu and six in Maguindanao under the Alliance of Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy Program.

There are now some 800 megawatts (MW) of solar power capacity in place around the world, enough to supply the annual energy needs of 200,000 US homes.

Wind power capacity totals about 7,630 MW to fuel 1.9 million homes, the research group reported.

Here, solar electricity has been commercialized since 1976 when Philippines Solar chief Robert Lopez Puckett introduced photovoltaric (PV) technology in both rural and urban areas.

More countries are now using this regenerate source of power to reduce their carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that pollute and heat up the atmosphere," explained Puckett.

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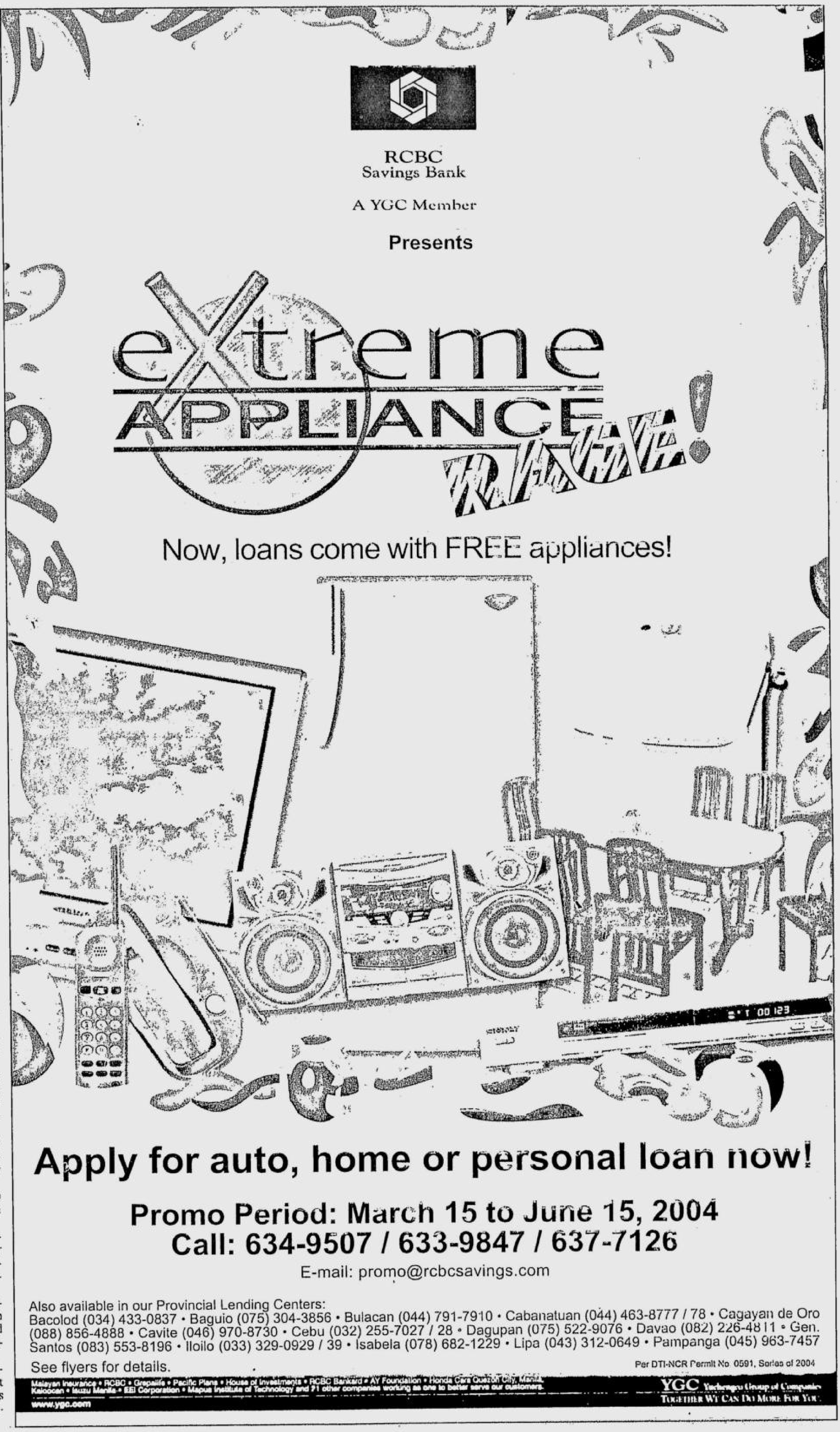
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- M dela Cruz off Arnaiz Ave (Dolores) 856 sqm P40,000 sqm
- Brgy Sta Clara G Villanueva cor. 662 sqm P21,000 sqm

PARAÑAQUE
- Tambo Vitamar 1st St 805 sqm with 2-storey bldg behind Pacific Coast Plaza P13,000 sqm.
- A Santos Ave. (Sucat Rd) nr BF Comml Center 17224 sqm P20,000 sqm.
- SLEX East Service Rd cor 2902 sqm United Parañaque Subd P14,000 sqm
  - East Service Rd Nr Posadas [illegible] 701 sqm P15,000 sqm
- SLEX West Service Rd Severina Diamond Subd Vacant Lot 2412 sqm, P7,000 sqm

LAS PIÑAS
- Amanza Zapote Alabang Rd 15,613 sqm Nr Goodyear Manila Doctors P25,000 sqm

MUNTINLUPA
- Filinvest Corporate City Parque de Escaña Res 2 units 1BDR 1TB 2BDR 2TB Parking Slots 1 each P4M P7M

TAGAYTAY CITY
- [illegible] Hi-way 2 [illegible] Vacant Adjacent 19981-1700 sqm Frontage 101-115M Cafe 500M City Hall 1.5KM

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- Naic Gov [illegible] Drive Vacant 144,304 sqm Front 250M Nr [illegible] P1100/sqm.

BATANGAS
- Lipa City Pres. [illegible] P. Garcia 12 Has Raw 12M Front 79M 2KM from Cathedral Comml Ctr Price 1200/sqm

CEBU CITY
- Reclamation Area 5th Ave Cor Vacant 846 sqm P15,000 sqm

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- Lapu-lapu City Agus 5 Hectares Beach Front 130M Best Offer

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- Rizal Blvd [illegible] 313 sqm Front 21M 40M [illegible]

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- Brent Rd The Pinnacle Res Condo 3BDR 2TB Fu[illegible]hed Nr. Pink Sisters Best Offe

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given of the lost of Solidbank Corp Stock Cert Nos 100015552 12shares 300000242 300014968, 300017537 300019114, 300024061 300025888 1share each issued to Conrado D. Olveros. If no contest received with in 1yr. new certificate will be issued (PDI-April 12, 19, 26, 2004)

PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen Person must pray this 3 consecutive days w/o starting one's wish after 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be promise to publish this soon as your favor has been granted.

-BBAS

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635-0219; 635-0220

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Cebu Regional Office
Gov. M. Cuenco Ave., Banilad, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority in Region VII, with its official address at Banilad, Cebu City, is inviting all interested qualified sack manufacturers / suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of the following empty sack (MTS) requirements for Visayas and Mindanao areas:

MTS Type	No. Of Pieces	Approved Budget for the Contract
1. Procurement MTS	600,000	4,418,400.00
2. Rice Milling MTS	500,000	3,086,000.00

Summary of Bidding Procedures:

The Bidding shall be governed by RA 9184. A single stage Two Envelope System of evaluation will be adopted. Envelope A shall contain the eligibility requirements as specified in the instruction to Bidders which will be evaluated in a non-discretionary "Pass" or "Fail" criteria. Only those who complied with all the requirements shall be declared "Eligible" and shall proceed to the next phase which is the opening of Envelope B. Envelope B shall contain the accomplished and signed Bid Form.

Bids will be ranked from lowest to highest to determine the Lowest Calculated Bid. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid shall undergo post qualification by the Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) to verify, validate and ascertain statements made and documents submitted in the eligibility requirements. After which, the bidder shall be declared "Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid" and shall be recommended for awarding of the contract.

Schedule of Activities:

Activity	Date/s	Time
Issuance of Bidding Documents	Apr. 12-14/04	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Pre Bidding Conference	Apr. 16, 2004	10:00 AM
Submission & Opening of Bids	Apr. 28, 2004	10:00 AM

Interested bidders may secure the bidding documents from the RBAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NFA, Region VII, Cebu City upon submission of a letter of intent and after payment of a non-transferable, non-refundable application fee of P5,000.00. Bidders or their authorized representatives are required to be present during the opening of sealed bids. For further inquiries, you may call the undersigned at the following numbers: (032) 232-1939 or (032) 232-6832.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any informality or defect found therein, and to accept bids which are deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO J. ADORABLE**
Assistant Regional Director/RBAC Chairman

(PDI-- April 6 & 12, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT
COTABATO CITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Metro Cotabato Water District invites interested suppliers for public bidding of supply & delivery:

A. 1 unit Utility Vehicle – Power Steering FB Deluxe with dual aircon, 2500cc, with stereo, with 4D56 Diesel Engine, 2.205 kgs. G.V.W., Body and Payload capacity of 1,140 kgs., 5 speed manual transmission with 185 SR 14-8 ply Radial Tires, 15 seater van, L-300.

B. 1 unit Utility Vehicle – PET 8 Footer High Side Pick-Up with Roof with 2500cc, 4D56 Diesel Engine, 2.205 kgs. G.V.W., Body and Payload capacity of 1,140 kgs., five (5) speed manual transmission with 185 SR 14-8 ply Radial Tires, with rain curtains and wide tail gate, L-300.

Interested parties may secure bid documents from Metro Cotabato Water District.

The schedule of the bidding activities is as follows:

PARTICULAR	DATE / TIME
Issuance of Bid Documents	April 13-16, 2004
Opening / Submission of Bids	April 21, 2004

The MCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the MCWD. The MCWD likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL D. MAGDAEL**
Chairperson
Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI-April 5 & 12, 2004)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar St. cor. Dr. J. Quintos St., Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-00-00; 526-01-00 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietors; or (b) 60% Filipino-owned Partnership/Corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item/Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2004-060	8,460 boxes continuous form, 11"x14-7/8"	P 5,589,538.00	LBP Funds
	3,000 boxes statement of account, 8-1/2"x9-1/2"	P 1,239,000.00	
2004-070	Various Office Supplies	P 3,824,008.32	LBP Funds
2004-075	1,050 units Personal Computers	P 43,010,625.00	LBP Funds
2004-084	One (1) lot supply, delivery, customization civil works and installation of five (5) units BILLS PAYMENT MACHINE (BPM) KIOSKS with Card Reader-Magnetic Reader, swipe-type (with front-end software Development plus five (5) licenses)	P 2,918,032.00	LBP Funds

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on May 5, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar St., Malate, Manila.

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on April 20 and 22, 2004, at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI - April 5 & 12 2004)

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MAXIMINO G. GALOS JR.

"Sonny"

January 31, 1947 – April 7, 2004

His bereaved wife **Linda**; son **Michael**; brother and sisters **Cyn** and **Jimmy Misalucha** (**Mae** and **James**), **Heidi** (**Julian**, **Jonjon**, **Millord**), **Myles** and **Monica** (**Milzy**), **Aisha**, and **Joy** and **Luis Velasquez** (**Joshua**).

His body lies at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe. His remains will be cremated on Wednesday, April 14, 2004 at 12 noon.

"We know that God raised
the Lord Jesus from death.
He will raise us to life
with Jesus. He will present us,
along with you, to God."

2 Corinthians 4:14

Our Beloved Boy did not wish to bother nor burden any of us.
Without bidding us goodbye,
He journeyed on to his eternal slumber.

Please say a prayer for

JOSE MARI TECSON MENDIOLA

who, last Holy Saturday, 10 April 2004
before sunrise, went to rest in peace with His Lord and left us:

his wife **Cristina Castillo**; his children **Coco**, **Trixie** and **Jacob**; his beloved parents **Senen** and **Josefina**; his siblings and their spouses **Marisse** and **Elie**, **Jojo** and **Deenna**, **Jim** and **Ginna** & **Jake** and **Christa**; his parents-in-law **Pabling** and **Minda**; his brothers and sisters-in-law **Romeo** and **Ma. Teresa**, **Lita** and **Ramon** & **Boyet** (†).

Friends who wish to bid him Farewell, may go to the Parish Hall of Sanctuario de San Jose, East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City. He will be laid to rest at the Loyola Memorial Park at a date to be announced later.

WE'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU, WE'LL ALWAYS WILL.

In
peace
shall
both
lie
down
and
sleep,
for
you
alone,
Lord
make
me
secure…"
Psalm 4:9

FELIX DE LEON FLORES

May 18, 1912 – April 7, 2004
Retired Professor of Philippine Military Academy
and University of the Philippines
AGRICULTURIST & ORCHIDIST

*Peacefully joined his Creator and his loving wife, **Josefa P. Flores**.*

He is survived by his children **OLIVIA & ROBERT DERBENTI, MA. TERESA P. FLORES, MA. LUISA** and **TITO DAVID, ALEX & PATTY, RAMON & CECILLE, BARBARA & JOJO ALBERTO, ROBERT & JENNIE**; grandchildren **Kenny & Danielle, Kerianne, Racquel, Angela & Tom, Jennifer & Richard, Rosemarie, Mark & Che, Katrina, Dino, Armand & Kerry, Miguel** and **Jet**; brother **Tasing**; sister **Tuding**; great grandchildren, nephews & nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at **Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City**.

Cremation will take place on **Tuesday, April 13, 2004 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.**

Interment will follow at **Sanctuario del Santo Cristo, San Juan, Metro Manila.**

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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of

DPWH DISTRICT ENGINEER

VITO AGUILAR ZARAGOZA

July 8, 1920 to April 13, 2003

On his
First Death Anniversary

The ZARAGOZA FAMILY requests relatives and friends to join them offer a Mass on April 13, 2004 at 11:00 a.m. at the ZARAGOZA MAUSOLEUM, ETERNAL GARDENS MEMORIAL PARK, BATANGAS CITY.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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Pasig City; Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
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Tels. 749-3806 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05
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Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque; Tels. 820-1592; 825-9947; 825-8635
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79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117
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G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite; Tels. (046) 471-3386;
(046) 471-4417; (046) 571-1978
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Commercial Center, Parañaque, Metro Manila
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City;
Tels. 895-1011 to 19
LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS
& CREMATORY SERVICES
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Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577
MALABED FUNERAL SERVICE
3-A Coronado St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City; Tel. 890-63-18
MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal; Tels. 645-1855; 682-0209; 682-0210
MARCELO FUNERAL HOMES
Tels. 283-1613; 273-8922
MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City; Tels. (075) 515-5960; 522-8783; (0917) 520-5001
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
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Tel. No. 697-0782; 697-0026; 650-7426; Fax : 697-2764
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13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City; Tels. 646-1725; 646-1730
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
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PRIME MEMORIAL CHAPELS
200 Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City; Tels. 427-8412; 4278403
ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson St.,
Mandalagan, Bacolod City; Tel. 433-7132
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
438 Cementina St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-1204
Sucat Branch: 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682; (0915) 712-1220
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City; Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No. 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City; Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City; Tels. 852-8228; 852-7284
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila;
Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City; Tels. 372-5084; 410-9286/87
UNIVERSAL FUNERAL SERVICE & MEMORIAL CHAPELS
2028 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila; Tels. 493-4458; 493-4540
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City;
Tels. 831-3797; 844-7846; 843-1801; 845-4836
WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tel. 302-5447
ZUASOLA FUNERAL HOMES
Brgy. Del Remedio, San Pablo City, Laguna
Tels. (049) 562-1668; 800-2914 Cel. No. (0917) 5016963

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS OF SPI TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

All shareholders of SPI Technologies, Inc. ("SPI") are hereby notified that on April 5, 2004, **THLPV ACQUISITION, L.P.** ("the Bidder") has filed a Tender Offer Report (SEC Form 19-1) with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") and the Philippine Stock Exchange ("PSE") pursuant to Section 19 of the Securities Regulation Code. The Bidder, which is a limited partnership organized in the State of Delaware, U.S.A., intends to acquire, through a wholly-owned Philippine subsidiary it intends to establish for the purpose during the Tender Offer Period, 100% of the fully diluted share capital of SPI (the "Shares")

The Tender Offer shall commence at 9:00 a.m. on April 12, 2004 and end at 3:00 p.m. on May 7, 2004 (the "Tender Offer Period"). The Shares are intended to be crossed on the PSE on May 20, 2004.

Should any of the business days during the period from April 12, 2004, the commencement of the Tender Offer Period and May 20, 2004, the Cross Date, inclusive, be officially declared a non-working holiday after the filing of the Tender Offer Report (SEC Form 19-1) on April 5, 2004, the period shall be extended by the number of business days corresponding to those which were declared as non-working holidays.

The purchase price for the acquisition of the Shares is US$87.230 million or US$0.2794 for each share and will be payable in US Dollars. SPI's shareholders who wish to convert their US Dollar proceeds into Philippine Pesos at the exchange rate to be quoted by Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corporation (the "Paying Agent") should so indicate in their Application to Tender. The exchange rate will be equivalent to the weighted average rate of all the Philippine Peso/US Dollar trades transacted at the Philippine Dealing System as of 11:30 a.m. one business day prior to the payment date for the tendered SPI shares, minus PhP0.05 for every US$1.00.

ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners, Inc., the Bidder's advisor, has received confirmation from the legal counsel to TH Lee Putnam Ventures, L.P., who owns 100% of the Bidder, and TH Lee Putnam Parallel Ventures, L.P. (the "Funds") that, based solely on the records of the Funds as of March 22, 2004, the Funds have an aggregate of approximately US$349.7 million in uncalled capital commitments which may be called upon with ten business days prior written notice. The foregoing confirmation indicates that resources are available to the Bidder sufficient to satisfy full acceptance of the Tender Offer.

The Bidder intends to pay the tendered and accepted shares on May 20, 2004. Payments for the tendered and accepted shares shall be made available by the Paying Agent for pick up by the tendering shareholders after 3:00 p.m. of May 20, 2004 at the following address: HSBC Trust Department, 30/F Discovery Centre, 25 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Centre, Pasig City. Contact person: Junji Arias (63-2) 683-2743.

Every shareholder of SPI is entitled to tender all or a portion of his/its Shares for acceptance and purchase by the Bidder, subject to the Terms of the Tender Offer, copies of which will be sent to all Shareholders.

Tendering Shareholders who hold stock certificates ("Scrip Shareholders") should submit within the Tender Offer Period their duly endorsed stock certificates and the duly accomplished Application together with the following requirements to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "Depository"), 17th Floor, Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Telephone No. (63-2) 849-8888 (Contact Person: Nilaida S. Enriquez):

If you are an
INDIVIDUAL SHAREHOLDER,
please submit the following, personally or through your attorney-in-fact:

1. Two (2) valid identification cards containing the photo and specimen signature of the shareholder.
2. For shareholders acting through an attorney-in-fact, a duly notarized Special Power of Attorney substantially in the form prescribed by the Bidder (*N.B.* Endorsement of stock certificate/s must be made by the shareholder himself).
3. A duly accomplished signature card containing the specimen signature of the shareholder and verified by his broker (the name of the broker and the broker's signatory must be specified) or officer of the bank (the name of the bank and the bank's officer must be specified) where he is maintaining an account.

If you are a
CORPORATE SHAREHOLDER,
Please submit the following:

1. Certified true copies of the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws of the shareholder and latest amendment/s thereof.
2. A notarized Secretary's Certificate substantially in the form prescribed by the Bidder setting forth resolutions of the tendering shareholder's Board of Directors authorizing the tender and sale of SPI Shares and designating the signatories for the purpose.
3. A duly accomplished signature card containing the specimen signatures of its authorized signatories validated by the Corporate Secretary and verified by its broker (the name of the broker and the broker's signatory must be specified) or officer of the bank (the name of the bank and the bank's officer must be specified) where it is maintaining an account.

For the convenience of Scrip Shareholders based in Visayas and Mindanao, SPI shares may be tendered by submitting the foregoing requirements at the Cebu and Davao branch offices of the Depository not later than April 30, 2004.

ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc.
Cebu Branch
Mezzanine Floor, TPG Center
Escario cor. F. Ramos Sts.
Cebu City
Telephone No.: (63-32) 255-1888
Contact Person: [Cheryl M. Lim]

ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc.
Davao Branch
Dr. #7 M.T. Aquino Building
Cabaguio Avenue Corner
Bolcan Street, Davao City
Telephone No.: (63-82) 224-2860
Contact Person: Miguel Luis R. Aquino

After said dates, Scrip Shareholders in Visayas and Mindanao may tender their shares only with the Depository's head office in Makati City.

The Depository will submit the share certificates for validation to SPI's Stock Transfer Agent: Union Bank of the Philippines, c/o Mr. Moises L. Almanon, Jr., 3rd Floor, SSS Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Telephone No. (63-2) 893-8584 or (63-2) 892-0011, Local 2351/2352). Defective applications (*e.g.*, with discrepancy between the specimen signatures on file and the endorsement) must be corrected within the Tender Offer Period to avoid being rejected by the Bidder. Hence, shareholders are strongly urged against tendering at the last minute to allow sufficient time to correct any deficiency in their application. Shareholders are also urged to indicate their telephone numbers in their respective application forms to allow the Depository to inform them immediately of any deficiency in their applications.

Tendering shareholders whose shares are lodged with the Philippine Central Depository Nominee Corporation ("PCD") ("Scripless Shareholders") should instruct their brokers to electronically transfer their shares to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "Broker") for receipt by the Broker prior to 3:00 p.m. of May 7, 2004. The Broker shall hold the tendered common shares only as custodian for said shares.

Tendering shareholders shall have the right to withdraw any tendered shares at any time during the Tender Offer Period. For a withdrawal to be effective, a written notice of withdrawal must be received by the Depository (for Scrip Shareholders) or by the Broker (for Scripless Shareholders) before 3:00 p.m. of May 7, 2004.

Copies of SEC Form 19-1 and the tender offer application kit may be obtained by Shareholders from the Depository/Broker at their addresses stated above. Copies of SEC Form 19-1 may also be downloaded by the Shareholders from SPI's website: www.spitech.com. Copies of this letter, along with the Application and the attachments, will be sent to the shareholders of record as of March 16, 2004 by personal delivery or registered mail.

For inquiries about the Bidder or the Tender Offer, please contact **Platon Martinez Flores San Pedro & Leaño** at (63-2) 867-4696 or **Ms. Nilaida Enriquez** of the Depository at its address set forth earlier in this letter.

(PDI–April 12, 13 & 14, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
CAMARINES NORTE STATE COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Daet, Camarines Norte

announces the opening of the position of

SUC PRESIDENT I

Minimum Qualifications

- A Filipino Citizen
- Preferably a holder of an earned doctoral degree
- Preferably not more than 60 years old at the time of the application
- Has at least five (5) years of relevant managerial & administrative experience
- Morally upright

In addition, nominees/interested applicants are required to make a full disclosure of all (filed, pending or resolved) administrative, criminal and civil cases, if any, through the following clearances / certifications:

- Sandigan Bayan
- Civil Service Commission
- Other Courts

Application/Nomination should be accompanied by:

- Detailed Curriculum Vitaé and documentary evidences supportive of qualification
- Statement of vision, mission and thrusts of the Camarines Norte State College
- Neuro-Psychiatric Exam
- Medical Certificate
- Drug test by an accredited health institution/center by Department of Health

Interested applicants/nominees are requested to submit six (6) copies of formal application, and all requirements on or before May 15, 2004 to:

Cristina Damasco Padolina
Commissioner, CHED and
Chairman-Designate, CNSC Board of Trustees
c/o Jennilyn M. Salubayba
5/F, DAP Bldg., San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. +632 687-6083 / Telefax: +632 638-4870

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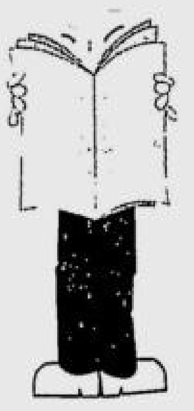

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Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BIDDING FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF REMITTANCE FORMS (ME-5 AND MI-5) FOR THE USE OF THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT
NO. 2004 – 004 g

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) wishes to invite duly licensed printers, manufacturers or suppliers for the procurement of 72,950 pads of ME-5 Remittance forms for the employed sector and 20,850 pads of MI-5 Remittance forms for the use of the Individually Paying Member.

ME-5 Remittance Form for the Employed Sector		MI-5 Remittance Form for the Individually Paying Member	
Quantity	72,950 pads (14,590,000 sheets) (50 sets per pad @ 4 copies per set)	Quantity	20,850 pads (4,170,000 sheets) (50 sets per pad @ 4 copies per set)
Size	Width 7.75 inches x Length 5 inches	Size	Width 7 inches x Length 5 inches
Material	Imported Carbonless Paper/ Colored on Top Side only: Impression must be clear up to the last ply White Carbonless paper Yellow Carbonless paper Green Carbonless paper Pink Carbonless paper Wrapping Paper Cover Chip Board	Material :	Imported Carbonless Paper/ Colored on Top Side only: Impression must be clear up to the last ply White Carbonless paper Yellow Carbonless paper Green Carbonless paper Pink Carbonless paper Wrapping Paper Cover Chip Board
Process	Offset printing / Red Gum Padded Back to back printing on all copies	Process	Offset printing / Red Gum Padded Back to back printing on all copies
Serial Numbers:	9 Digits - All Numeric (Crash Numbering) 72,950 pads (206010001 - 209657500)	Serial Numbers:	9 Digits - All Numeric (Crash Numbering) 20,850 pads (103750001 - 104792500)
Packaging	50 pads per corrugated box	Packaging	50 pads per corrugated box
Serial Numbers must be posted on two (2) opposite sides of the box		Serial Numbers must be posted on two (2) opposite sides of the box	

The approved budget for the contract for the ME-5 forms is P2,511,668.50 M while the approved budget for the contract for MI-5 forms is P 633,840.00 coming from COB 2004.

Bid documents can be obtained from April 2 to 15, 2004, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office, (Room 1804) 18th floor, **PHILHEALTH**, Citystate Centre Bldg., #709 Shaw Blvd. Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,500.00.

A pre-bid conference will be held on, April 22, 2004 at 1:30 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office.

Submission of bids will be on April 30, 2004 *on or before 12:00 noon* (during office hours)at the office of the BAC Secretariat (Room 1804). Opening of Bids will follow at *1:30 p.m.* at the same date and venue. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804 (Office of the BAC Secretariat). **Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.**

(Sgd.)OCTAVINO Q. ESGUERRA
Senior Vice President and Chief Actuary
BAC Chairman for Goods and Services

(PDI – April 1 & 12, 2004)

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The 2nd Overseas Filipinos Worldwide (OFW) Trade Show and Seminar

Theme: 'Overseas Filipinos Economic Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship'
April 16-18, 2004
Hall 3, SM Megatrade, Mandaluyong City, Philippines

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

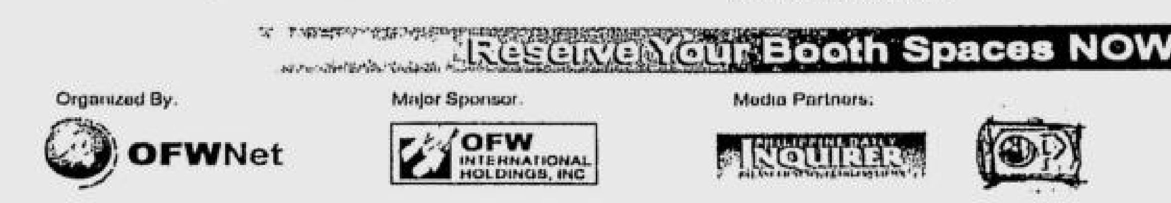
- 3-day trade exhibit showcasing business opportunities and investments for OFWs and their families
- 3-day entrepreneurship seminar for OFWs and their families
- Business matching activities and meetings
- Entrepreneurship presentations of participating companies
- Social and fellowship night of OFWs
- City tours for OFWs and their families

EXHIBIT PROFILE

- Remittance and Financial Services
- Travel Agencies, Transportation, Tour Packages
- Micro Financing and Leasing
- Insurance Companies
- Franchising Business
- Banks and Credit Card Companies
- Manpower Services (Land/Sea-based)
- Real Estate and Properties
- Telecommunication Companies
- Freight Forwarders and Shipping Companies
- Health Care and Medical Services/Companies
- Computer Training Institutes/Centers
- Computer Hardware and Software
- Print and Online Media
- Fresh and Processed Food Products
- Natural/Herbal/Organic Products

SEMINAR TOPICS

- Kalayaan sa Kakapusan
- Pagnenegosyo 101/Entrepreneurship Basic
- Building Successful Business Plans
- Franchising for First-Time Entrepreneurs
- Franchise Business Presentations
- Entrepreneurship Case Studies
- Business and Product Demonstrations
- OFW Networking Sessions



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PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
East Avenue, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

The Philippine Heart Center (PHC) is inviting bidders for:

DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget	Bidding Fee
Supply of Laminated Reflective Glass	1.5 million	3,000.00

Source of Funding: **PHC FUNDS**

The list of eligibility requirements will be issued at the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, Purchasing Division, Basement of MAB, PHC, East Avenue, Quezon City. Only eligible bidders shall be required to pay the non-refundable bidding fee. The deadline for the submission of requirements is on **May 3, 2004** not later than 4:00 p.m. For any inquiry, please call Purchasing Divison at tel. no. 922-0574 ask for Ms. Noemi Nocasa.

The PHC reserves the right to reject any and all bids or declare a failure of bidding or not award the contract, if there is evidence of collusion between relevant public officers or employees of the PHC and any of the bidders, or among the bidders, or between bidders and third parties, including any act which restricts, suppresses or nullifies competition, or if the BAC is found to have failed to follow the prescribed bidding procedures. The agency also reserves the right to waive any formality on the bids received, provided that such waiver does not refer to a major deviation in a bid or any requirement provided for in the **Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)** of Republic Act No. 9184 pertaining to the substance of the bid. Should such review uncover any misrepresentation made in the eligibility statement, or any chages in the situation of the bidder materially downgrade the substance of such statements, the PHC shall disqualify the bidder upon due notice without any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by it in the preparation of its bids.

(Sgd.) **RAUL D. JARA, M.D.**
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - April 3, 4, 11 & 12, 2004)

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Center for Health Development - NCR
DR. JOSE N. RODRIGUEZ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Tala, Caloocan City

April 5 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital invites responsible and duly accredited suppliers from DOH/CHD-NCR to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of the following items:

A. GROCERY PRODUCTS
B. PORK, POULTRY & EGGS, COW'S BEEF
C. FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
D. FISH & SEAFOODS
E. BAKERY PRODUCTS

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES
Issuance of Bid Documents: APRIL 12-27, 2004
Pre-Bid Conference: APRIL 14, 2004, 1:00 p.m.
Submission and Opening of Bids: April 28, 2004, 1:00 p.m.

Prospective bidders may secure bid proposal forms from the BAC Secretary, Administrative Office, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of (P400.00) FOUR HUNDRED PESOS.

All activities shall be held at the Training Room, Dr Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, Tala, Caloocan City, unless announced otherwise.

Each bid must accompanied by a bidder's bond in the form of a certified check, manager's check, or GSIS Bond in an amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid. The Approved Budget Cost is stated on the bid tender documents

For further inquiries, interested bidders may contact the BAC Secretary or call telephone no. 962-9887 or 962-9884

DR. JNRMH reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to notice of award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidders of the grounds for the hospital's action

(Sgd.) **DAVE ELVIN G. SANCHEZ, MD.**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – April 6 & 12, 2004)

NTC wants aging RP communications laws reviewed

By Alexander F. Villafania

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission (NTC) wants to review all existing telecommunication laws in the Philippines to plug holes that deter the country's use of new technologies.

"New developments in telecommunications have been coming up fast worldwide and it's difficult to keep up with the trend especially if there are laws that prevent them from being used here," said Kathleen Heceta, deputy commissioner of the NTC.

Heceta said many of the telecom laws need to be updated to accommodate the use of new technologies such as IP telephony, Bluetooth and wireless fidelity (wi-fi), as well as Internet-related intellectual property laws.

She said that while other countries in Asia have already installed major communications infrastructure, the Philippines still has to wrestle with some legal aspects on technology use.

"As much as possible, we don't want to regulate, which is why having laws that allow the free use of new technologies is necessary. But we have to make sure that everyone is satisfied with these laws," Heceta said.

Heceta added that the NTC would want to pursue the reviews on the telecommunication laws after the May 10 elections.

According to Heceta, the Convergence Bill was indefinitely shelved last year despite aggressive lobbying from its author, Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos. The Convergence Bill could have been one of the laws that would push for the development of better services.

The NTC has approved the creation of a technical working group to undertake the formulation of telecom equipment standards.

Microsoft finally adopting open source?

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

MICROSOFT Corp. dropped the bomb on the industry last week when it announced that some of its software code would be released under an open-source license.

The Redmond-based software giant released the Windows Installer XML, to SourceForge, an open source code repository, a report from "Microsoft Watch" said.

The report said that the software company has made this "internally developed product" available to SourceForge.

WiX is a toolset used for developing Windows installation packages from XML (Extensible Markup Language) source code. It runs on Windows NT and Windows 2000.

Jason Matusow, manager of Microsoft's shard source initiative, indicated that the initiative is an acknowledgment of the "importance of sharing code with developers."

The report said that Microsoft has made its source code available under a variety of licensing mechanisms, all under its "shared source" umbrella.

However, the world's lagest and most profitable software company has yet to release code under a "true open-source license," the report said.

Windows Server System

Microsoft .net

The WiX toolset has been used by some Microsoft teams across the company, including the Yukon database, Office 12, Exchange "Kodiak," Update Services and Xbox divisions, the report said.

WiX, however, is not Microsoft's core code, which means that it is not a .Net project, the report said.

The report said that Microsoft plans to label its WiX common public license (CPL) program as one of its "shared source" options.

The CPL was developed by IBM and is an evolution of the IBM Public License. Later, the CPL was approved by the Open Source Initiative in May 2001. CPL bestows commercial rights for modification and distribution.

It also ensures patentability (on a royalty-free basis), and allows individuals to build on top of the technology and use the resulting products commercially and/or proprietarily.

Under the CPL, all changes made to the source must be returned to the community, even though the individual who make the changes retain ownership rights to them.

With WiX now available via the Internet, Microsoft said that customers can now download the code.

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RP information tech investments show 25% growth

By Alexander F. Villafania

AMID a slow recovery in the global information technology industry last year, the Philippines' information and communications technology (ICT) sector posted P5.7 billion worth of foreign investments in the fourth quarter of 2003, according to the most recent foreign direct investments (FDI) report of the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB).

The amount is 25 percent higher than the P4.6 billion registered for the same quarter in 2002. The FDI also noted that the ICT sector represents about 40 percent of the total approved FDIs during the period in review.

These figures already make the ICT sector the second biggest industry to get the most number of approved foreign investments last year. The manufacturing industry led FDIs during the fourth quarter of 2003, posting P9 billion.

The NSCB report, released last March 30, noted that there were P14.1 billion worth of total FDIs in the fourth quarter of last year. It covered foreign investments made through the Bureau of Investments (BOI), the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza), the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), and the Clark Development Corporation (CDC).

Based on the BOI report, investments in IT services swelled to P1.4 billion, 24 percent higher than figures for the same quarter of 2002. IT services are composed of call center and data services, as well as business process outsourcing (BPO).

On the other hand, total FDIs on the ICT accessories, spare parts and equipment category fell 10 percent despite retaining 76 percent or P4.3 billion of all ICT investments during the same period.

The NSCB report also noted that the BOI listed only P134.4 million in the fourth quarter of 2003, compared to the P699.6 million figure for the same quarter of 2002.

Meanwhile, Peza investments rose to P5.527 billion the fourth quarter of 2003 against P3.704 billion during the same period the previous year.

The SBMA and the CDC did not receive any ICT investments in the fourth quarter of 2003.

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FX6021
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Sun envisions . . .

From page B16

for tracking goods in their supply chain," Valdez said. "The suppliers have no choice but to follow Wal-Mart's system, which shows how inevitable the march of technology is."

Wal-Mart will implement its system-wide use of RFID for its top 100 suppliers in January 2005. The RFID tags will use low-powered radio transmitters to read data at distances ranging from 1 inch to 100 feet. The tags will be used instead of bar codes and can contain a lot more data, allowing manufacturers, suppliers and retailers to track and manage assets more efficiently. Wal-Mart's deployment of RFID tags with the retailer's top 100 suppliers will involve about 1 billion tags.

A network of "things" and devices opens up new markets for Sun. As network intelligence and requirements increase, Sun will step in with its server and storage products as well as its network management products. On the device side, Sun can benefit by having this network of "things" follow commands written in Java.

The key, according to Valdez, is to put the intelligence on the network and let the devices and "things" get connected. It is no longer about putting more power on the devices, he said. Rather, it is all about centrally managing your operations from the network.

"Moore's Law is bound to run out of gas," Valdez said, referring to Intel co-founder Gordon Moore who postulated that a microprocessor's circuitry and power would double every 18 to 24 months. "It's not about putting power into the device. Moore's Law will no longer apply in the future. Doubling processor power simply isn't going to hack it."

That's because Sun is relying on the power of the network, not on the clients connected to it. Valdez said that throughput computing and addressing memory and network bottlenecks are better solutions.

"Instead of optimizing on just single-thread processor performance and waiting 75 percent of the time on memory, Sun is approaching the problem with chip multi-threading to deal with the memory latency problem," Valdez said. "Couple this with a lot of bandwidth so that data won't flood the processors and you'd have a more efficient network."

With this, Valdez said, Sun can change the rules of the IT market and allow them to innovate in preparation for a wireless, networked future.

"We spend $1.9 billion every year for research and development," Valdez said. This makes Sun the 42nd largest R&D spender worldwide.

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INFOTECH

Editor: Leo Magno

Sun envisions 'things' connected to Internet

By Leo Magno

IN LESS than a decade, intelligent devices and "things" will be wirelessly connected to powerful computers which will in turn be connected to high-capacity networks that would run the entire system seamlessly in the background. This is how Sun Microsystems sees the future circa 2012.

For more than two decades now since the company was founded in 1982, Sun has had a singular vision—"The network is the computer." The company now believes that it is getting closer to achieving that vision with enterprises becoming more reliant on networks.

"We are only part way through the vision of network computing and the exponential growth of network attached devices," said Edward Valdez, Sun vice president for processor and network products. "We believe that everything with a digital heartbeat and more will one day be connected to the network."

These network attached devices Valdez is referring to could range anywhere from entertainment gadgets to business equipment. A study by International Data Corp. conducted this year estimates that by 2012, there would be 11 billion appliances and toys attached at one point to a network. This is followed by 3.7 billion computers, 1.3 billion handheld devices and 400 million devices related to industrial, automotive or entertainment purposes.

These however, comprise only the traditional network devices totaling 17 billion by 2012. Interestingly, the same IDC study estimates that by 2012, there would be 1 trillion RFID (radio frequency ID) tags and sensors worldwide, and these would all be wirelessly connected to different networks.

"All of these devices will have IP addresses and 'things' will have sub-IP addresses," Valdez said.

Sun differentiates "devices" like cellular phones, handheld computers and personal digital assistants from "things" like RFID tags and sensors. Valdez has optimistic views about the proliferation of "an Internet of things," especially the RFID tag.

VALDEZ

RFID tags and sensors are small electronic devices that have memory, control logic and antennas. They are used for telemetry-type of data such as the tracking of merchandise from one point of a production line to its delivery to a customer. These "things," according to Valdez, will get smaller from their current size of 2x2 centimeters to as small as a grain of rice embedded in the packaging of clothes, food and other products.

"A good example is Wal-Mart, which is working with its suppliers to deploy RFID tags

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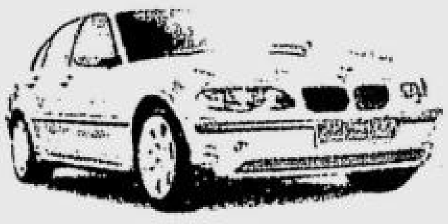

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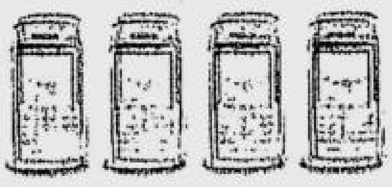

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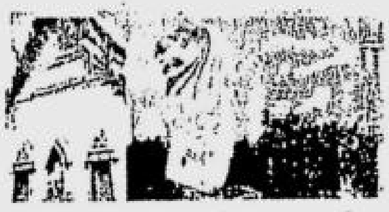

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'Really unique' power shift spreads in RP

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

"TREACHEROUS" was the word used. If you slipped off the footpath you would fall into this deep ravine in a mountainous area in South Cotabato. The path was so narrow that two people could not pass through it unless they walked sideways.

"You first had to shout to make sure that no one else was approaching from the other end," says Rudy Jimenea, an official of the social welfare department in the province.

Today the footpath has become a safe road 6 meters wide. The people of the barangay chose it as their special project under the Kalahi-CIDSS program.

Poorest municipalities

The full name is Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan—Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services. Kalahi is the government's main anti-poverty program, and it covers the poorest municipalities of the poorest provinces.

It is led by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The flagship movement is supported by a $ 100 million loan from the World Bank. Launched in January 2003 Kalahi has already reached out to 78 municipalities in 33 provinces. Within its life span of six years it should help two million poor households, or around 10 million Filipinos.

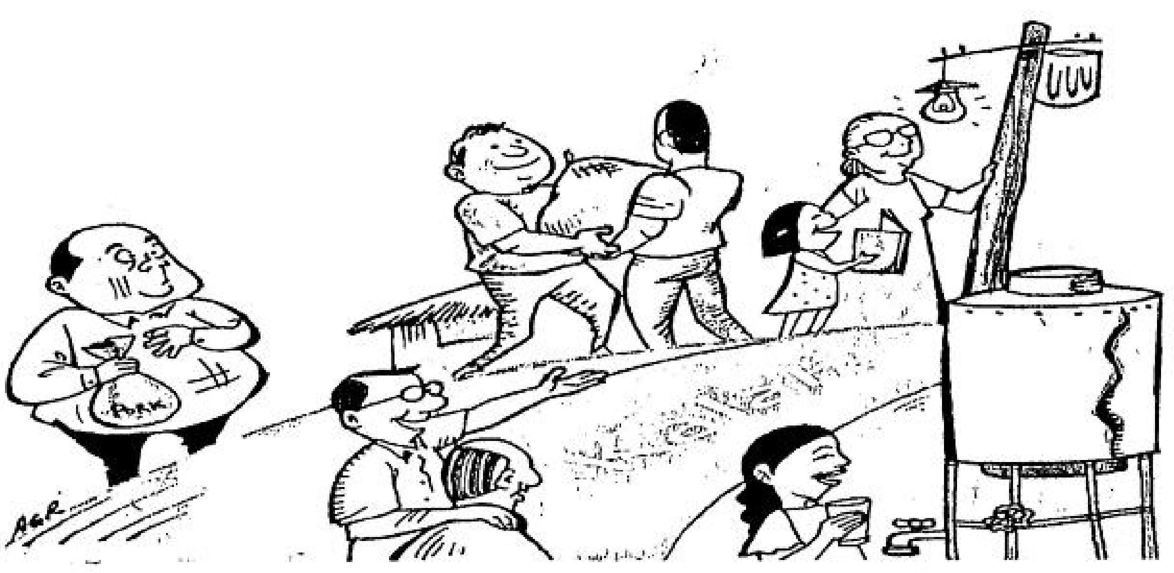
At the end of March, the DSWD and the World Bank recognized the best projects from 11 regions. Speakers from across the country shared their experiences in a conference in Intramuros.

"The common feedback we get from the people was 'lahi gyud!' as we say there," Jimenea told me. "That means 'iba talaga!' or 'really unique.'"

Power from below

What makes Kalahi unique? It turns the local power play upside down. Normally a politician dangles pork barrel money to attract votes. He packages infrastructure projects as personal favors for the community. Large signs display his name for all to see. Worse, the barangays that did not support him during elections are punished via neglect.

In contrast, Kalahi is driven by public demand, not patronage. The people look at their basic needs and find out which of them are the most deprived. They think up the projects to address the problems. Then they are trained to prepare project proposals.



Different barangays in the municipality compete for the funds, and speakers take turns presenting their proposals before a large forum. The best proposals win the money to build the infrastructure, and the funds are released directly to the communities. Financial statements are posted in the barangay hall and are reported to the general assembly.

Probably more important than the infrastructure is the social infrastructure. Around 50,000 people are being trained to identify their needs, prepare proposals, and work through the money channels. Communities can thus demand projects from their politicians.

Among the projects most demanded are those that provide potable water.

Life-giving water

"A little more waiting and water will soon be dripping from our faucets," says Eugene Tena, a volunteer from Barangay Pandan in Quezon. He and fellow residents have to wake up at 3 a.m., walk through rugged terrain, and go on a three-kilometer boat ride to fetch a few pails.

That will soon end. The village's project is a 5,000-gallon water tank that will benefit 117 households. Tena will see his sacrifice pay off: the 62-year old would walk 24 kilometers to attend Kalahi meetings.

In one barangay in Davao del Norte, the water supply was threatened by the run-off from fertilizers and pesticides.

"We endured drinking unsafe water from wells and pumps because we didn't have other sources," says volunteer Percy Hayap. It was worse in another village: the people had to buy their daily water from a neighboring barangay. Now comes a water supply project covering 8 barangays. The people went on to dig the canals and lay down the pipes.

"Now we have already installed 46 tap stands and we have not experienced any water shortage," says Barangay captain Dionisio Sumlog.

In one coastal barangay in Iloilo, salty water would seep into their supply. Children also suffered from water-borne diseases, prompting the people to respond with a water project.

The community has worked out its system of fees and maintenance work. Volunteers who handle the chlorination are paid an honorarium. The entire arrangement makes a profit.

Learning to speak up

Water projects are just a slice of the entire pie. The barangays design the projects according to their specific needs. Far-flung villages get roads. Tribal communities get latrines and seedlings. Farm towns get irrigation, mills, and marketing centers. Isolated islands get boats to ferry the school children. And kids who could not study at night now have electricity.

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Well, he will develop the skill as he and 50,000 others get used to cornering their local politicians. *Comments to darroyo@philonline.com*

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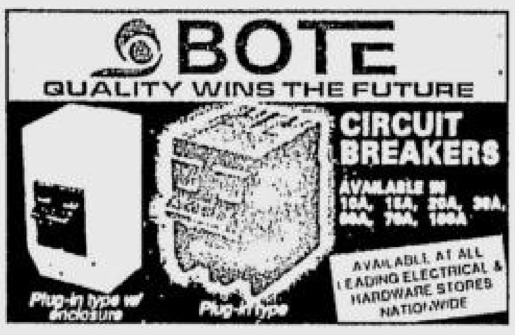
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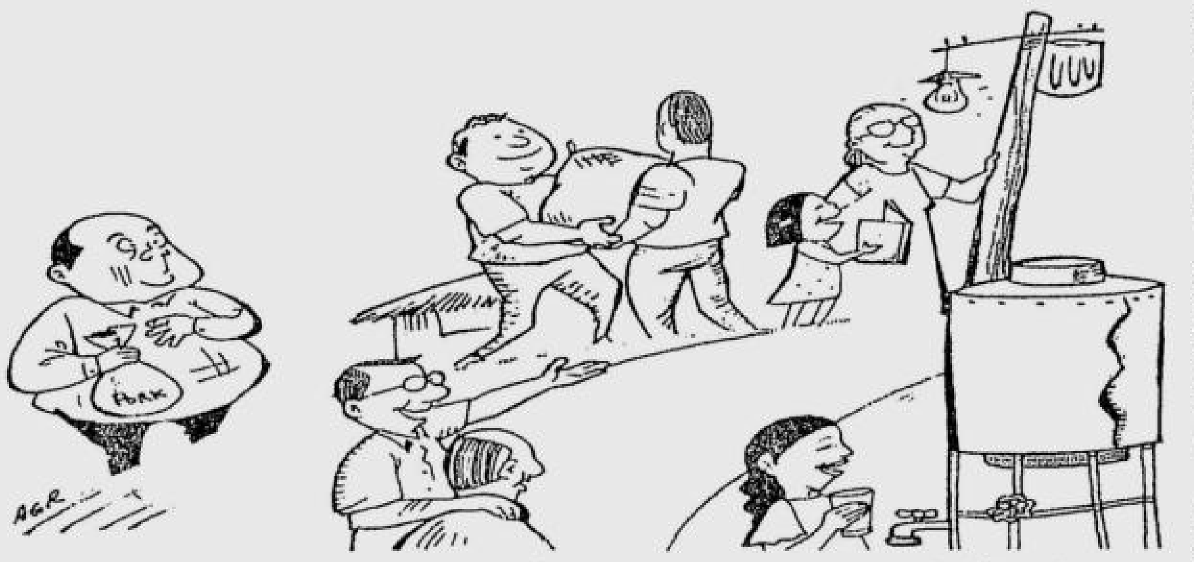

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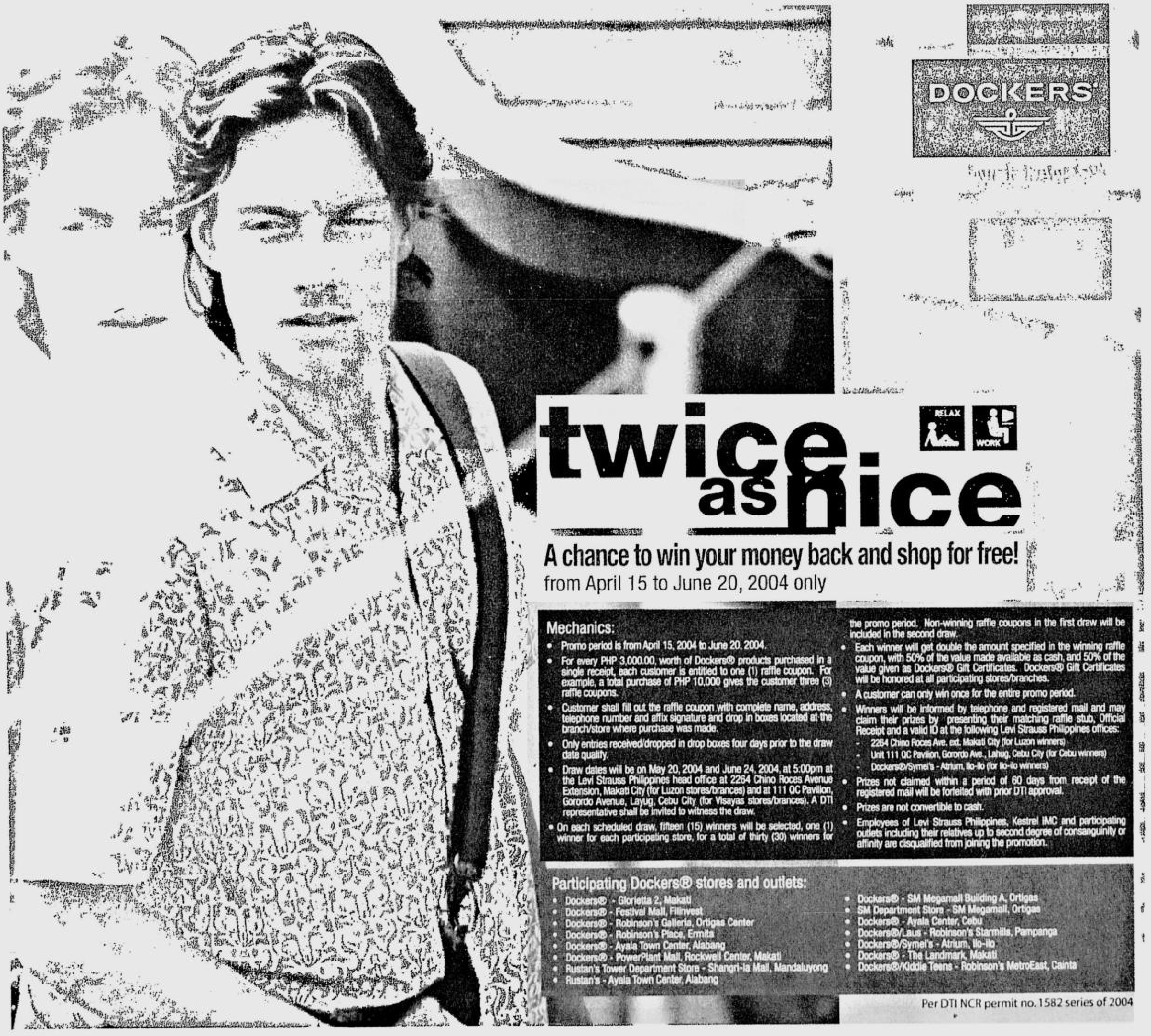
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BIR: What's good, what could be better

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Manuel A. Alcuaz Jr.

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue (BIR) has reversed several years of deteriorating performance.

This is largely due to Commissioner Guillermo Parayno who is a first class technocrat.

He is well educated and very knowledgeable both in management and information systems.

But being a technocrat is not enough. Doing your own job is not enough.

One must also have a national or country perspective and be able to take a stand.

Otherwise, you may be in the company of many excellent technocrats and managers like Cesar Virata, Jimmy Laya, Bobby Ongpin and Titoy Pardo.

They did their own jobs but apparently did not notice the abuses of Marcos, Erap and cronies.

Narrow vision trap

The Commissioner is very focused on the objective of increasing revenue.

This is important, but he also needs to have a broader perspective and look at the impact of BIR rules and actions on national policy and the economy.

Otherwise the Commissioner may fall into the trap of a long line of Department of Agrarian Reform secretaries, for instance, who fall over each other in an effort to cut up and distribute agricultural land.

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Royalty tax on software

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This growth and development would, as a by-product, also create additional taxes and revenue for government.

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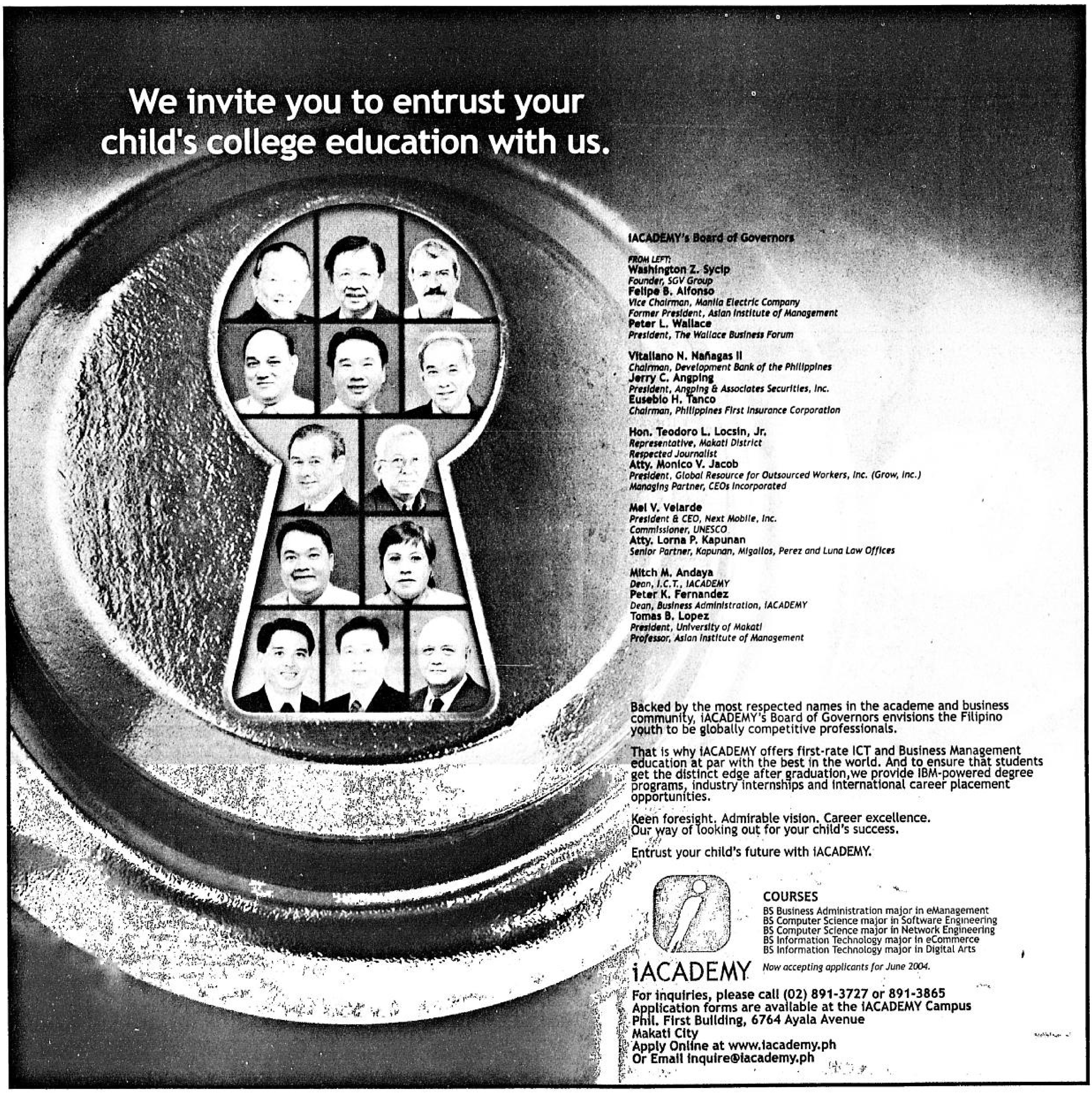
BIR/ B2-3



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BIR: What's good, what could be better

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Manuel A. Alcuaz Jr.

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue (BIR) has reversed several years of deteriorating performance.

This is largely due to Commissioner Guillermo Parayno who is a first class technocrat.

He is well educated and very knowledgeable both in management and information systems.

But being a technocrat is not enough. Doing your own job is not enough.

One must also have a national or country perspective and be able to take a stand.

Otherwise, you may be in the company of many excellent technocrats and managers like Cesar Virata, Jimmy Laya, Bobby Ongpin and Titoy Pardo.

They did their own jobs but apparently did not notice the abuses of Marcos, Erap and cronies.

Narrow vision trap

The Commissioner is very focused on the objective of increasing revenue.

This is important, but he also needs to have a broader perspective and look at the impact of BIR rules and actions on national policy and the economy.

Otherwise the Commissioner may fall into the trap of a long line of Department of Agrarian Reform secretaries, for instance, who fall over each other in an effort to cut up and distribute agricultural land.

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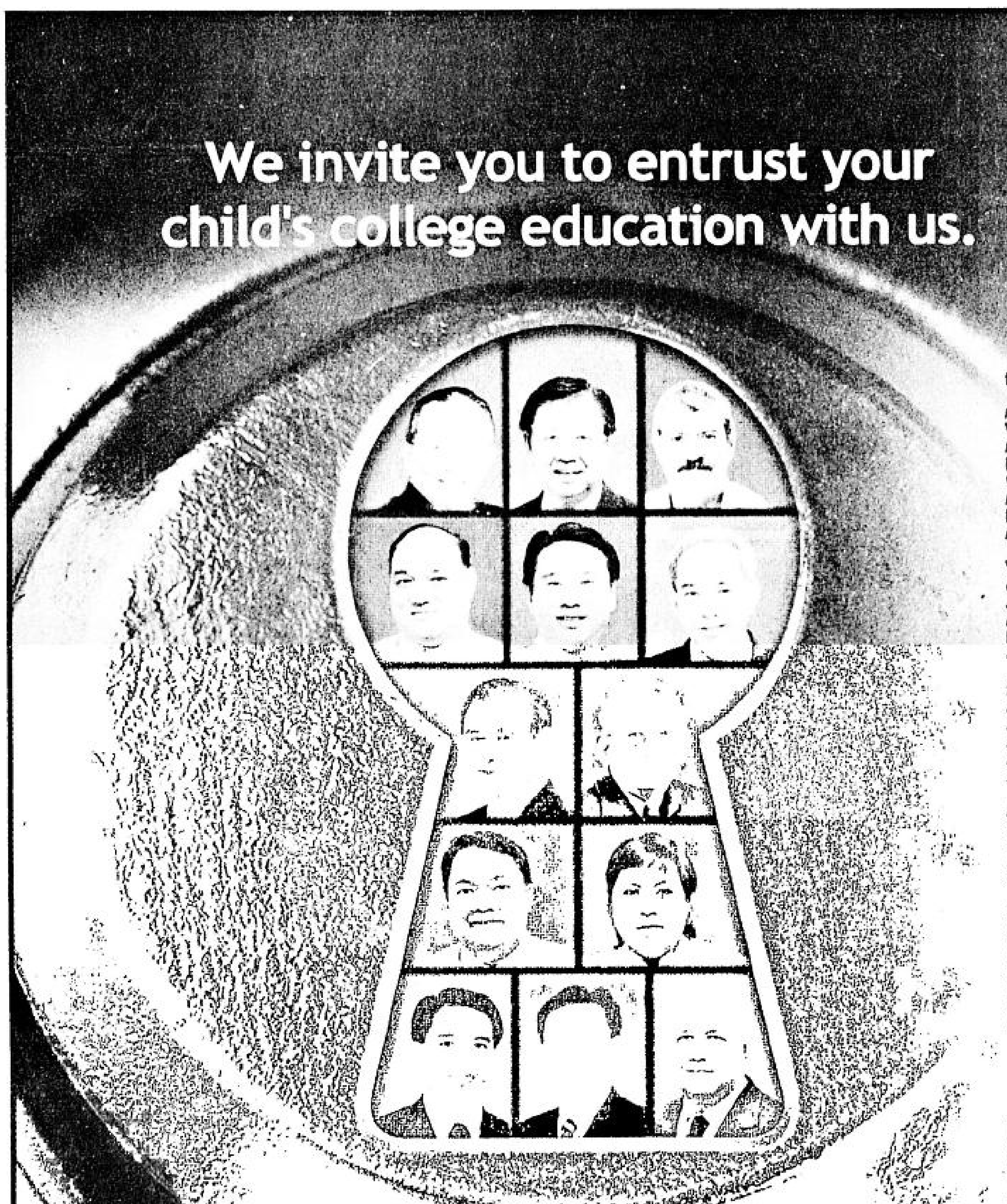

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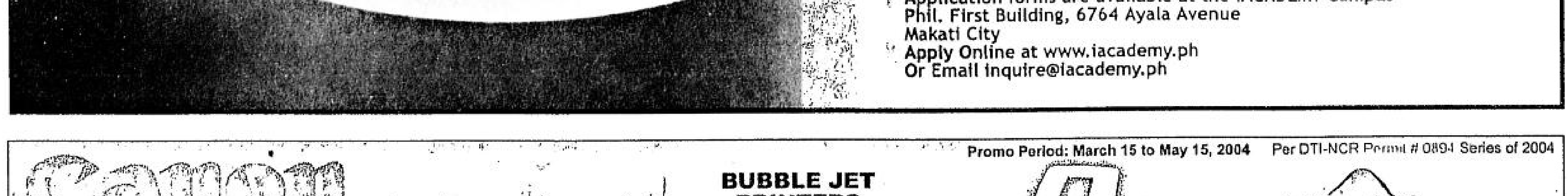

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PILFERAGE CONTROLS

Retail firms hard pressed to cut their losses

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

A HIGH-END store selling photographic equipment does not know how it could have happened.

After all, it bought the latest in expensive surveillance equipment, had a full complement of security guards and alert personnel manning the counters.

And yet, a crime syndicate was still able to break through these security measures and cart away with digital cameras right under the staff's noses.

A leading bookstore chain, on the other hand, lost a fax machine to a shoplifter. Apparently he got away with having the machine gift-wrapped at another counter, because he was not required at that time to present a receipt.

Criminals are getting more and more creative, laments Philippine Retailers Association official Alegria Limjoco.

Limjoco says this is the reason why the PRA and the Philippine Franchise Association have worked hard at spreading the word about the latest modus operandi to protect retailers against these criminal elements.

"We conduct seminars on the latest tactics. We show videos of tactics used such as stealing from the cash register and how somebody can get around the store cameras that many retailers use," she tells Retail Asia in an interview.

Limjoco says the retailers associations also inform the member retailers about the latest measures in checking inventory, to check against internal losses.

"These are deterrents. We study the latest modus operandi and inform our people about it. It is part of our service. We even have courses in leading schools on retailing and managing a store and preventing losses is one of our main issues," she explains.

The need to keep losses to a minimum is never more urgent as now because the liberalization of the Philippine retail industry has significantly raised the level of competition in the market.

Local retailers have resorted to bringing their prices down to the lowest possible level to get customers to remain loyal to them. Consequently, margins have thinned so much that a loss of one or two pieces of expensive equipment would be enough to make a serious dent on their finances.

The PRA estimates that an equivalent of one percent of sales are lost to pilferage. This may not seem like much but with margins at sometimes as thin as 2 percent, it takes on a greater significance.

Limjoco says the PRA stresses on internal control management because of estimates that insiders caused 70 percent of the losses. Only 30 percent were caused by thieves or by syndicates.

Department stores' losses were estimated at a higher range of between 2 and 4 percent, and at least 5 percent for the lower-end retail shops.

The more recent victims are stores cellular phones and accessories, owing to the immense popularity of cellular phones in the Philippines. These accessories are also relatively small and easy to conceal, thus, are prime targets for shoplifters.

The PRA studies on the local market revealed that shoplifting has become a way of life for syndicates. The same groups of shoplifters that target one mall would simply go to the next mall and do the same thing.

This is despite the fact that the larger malls and supermarkets have invested more in security equipment.

Once caught, the PRA said that syndicate members are just asked to pay 10 times the value of what they stole and are let go. Most retail owners do not want to go through the process of putting them to jail as it is a long and potentially expensive endeavor.

ISLANDS SOUVENIRS loses I percent of its products to pilferage.

Retail Asia features here a number of Philippine companies that have taken serious steps to fight internal and external losses, thus, keeping their operations healthy and providing examples for other companies to emulate.

Picture City

Paul A. Santos, president of Picture City International Inc., one of the country's leading photo shop chains, says that a bigger problem facing retailers is losses due to inside jobs.

Santos this has always been the case not only in the Philippines but in other countries as well, thus, Picture City invests more in training staff to prevent losses from inside jobs than in buying the latest surveillance equipment.

"We have tight inventory controls and we conduct spot audits on our 50 shops but I believe that the most effective deterrent is the employees' realization that management is on its toes," Santos says.

Santos, who also sits as vice president of the PRA, says that there is a need to always be on the lookout to improve loss prevention measures because of thinning margins.

"The idea is to be very vigilant because losses are unchecked, these will really erode bottom lines. That is why we have to keep inventory losses to a minimum," he explains.

Santos says Picture City has its shares of losses from both internal and external factors.

Picture City management tries to curb these incidents by putting high value merchandise behind glass. There are also a number of security guards manning the stores and Picture City also has sensors that send out an alarm if unpaid goods are brought out of the store.

Despite these measures, Picture City lost a number of expensive items which management charges to experience.

"It was a very expensive lesson but we had to go through it. We just have to be really vigilant," he says.

Picture City was established in the 1970s by Santos' father and has carved a niche in the market by offering a wide variety of main brand photography equipment. Most of its stores are outside the capital of Metro Manila, where it has 11 branches.

Islands Souvenirs

Novelty shop Islands Souvenirs estimates that it loses around one percent of its products to pilferage, which it wants to lower by adopting a number of security measures.

Islands Souvenirs founder and chief executive Jay Aldeguer says in an interview that its counter measures include:

- installation of a detector device system
- bag inspection and body frisking of employees
- internal control measures such as issuance of gate passes
- manning of exits by security guards
- checking of garbage cans
- coordination with mall security to update staff on the latest modus operandi of shoplifers, and
- physical inventory conducted every month.

Aldeguer says Islands Souvenirs' policy is to charge the outlet's losses to the staff just to keep them on their toes and make them more vigilant. He, however, says that management tries all that it can to keep pilferage down to controllable levels.

"It is very important to keep pilferage at a minimum so that the moral of employees will be kept high. The policy of the company is to charge the losses to the staff. Successive, pilferage will mean nonstop charging to the staff," he says.

"Eventually, it will have some bad effect on the disposition of the staff and this will result in low sales. Low sales is not good for the company," he adds.

Islands Souvenirs operates the country's biggest chain of novelty shops that sells souvenir items

RETAIL/ B2-7

BIR: What's good . . .

From page B2-2

less corruption and a level playing field.

Level playing field

We don't need a very intelligent and articulate president. Remember, we had such a man in Marcos!

Unfortunately, the BIR seems to be intent on tilting the playing field and causing industrial distortion and upheaval. Why?

If we take BIR's official line in order to raise badly needed revenues for government, some naughty minds seem to think that huge campaign contributions may be involved.

The BIR's implementation of RR-22-2003 is an honest businessman's nightmare and some powerful businessmen's path to greater fortune.

Leandro Tan of the University of Asia and Pacific has done an authoritative study of how the BIR has destroyed some brands by overtaxing them and favored other brands by not increasing their taxes on the grounds that they are "variants" of old brands.

The BIR has now been served with two TROs because its implementation of excise taxes does not follow uniformity in taxation and is therefore unconstitutional.

Double standard

Indeed, the BIR appears to have a double standard - one for the ordinary taxpayers and one for big shots.

An ordinary cash-strapped business is delayed in remitting withholding tax.

When it voluntarily tries to update its taxes, it gets slapped with penalty and interest. That is fine. But when BIR slaps a "compromise" equal to the penalty and interest, what does "compromise" mean? Does it mean that to lower the tax, the taxpayer must bribe someone?

We ordinary taxpayers view a "compromise" as a reduced tax paid by big and influential delinquent taxpayers, and even worse, as taxes that are not collected from the powerful.

In the US, the Internal Revenue Service collected from Vice President Agnew taxes on expensive fishing trips given to him by rich friends.

In the Philippines, such things do not happen.

What happened to the P1 million "balato" given by Estrada to Senators Tessie Oreta and John Osmeña.

Senator Osmeña said he returned the P1 million but one doesn't know how long after he received it.

How about the P1 million golf bet Abalos claims he won. That's how he gave the Comelec Commissioners a free trip to Korea in November 2002.

That's very magnanimous on Abalos' part but has he paid taxes on his P1 million gambling income?

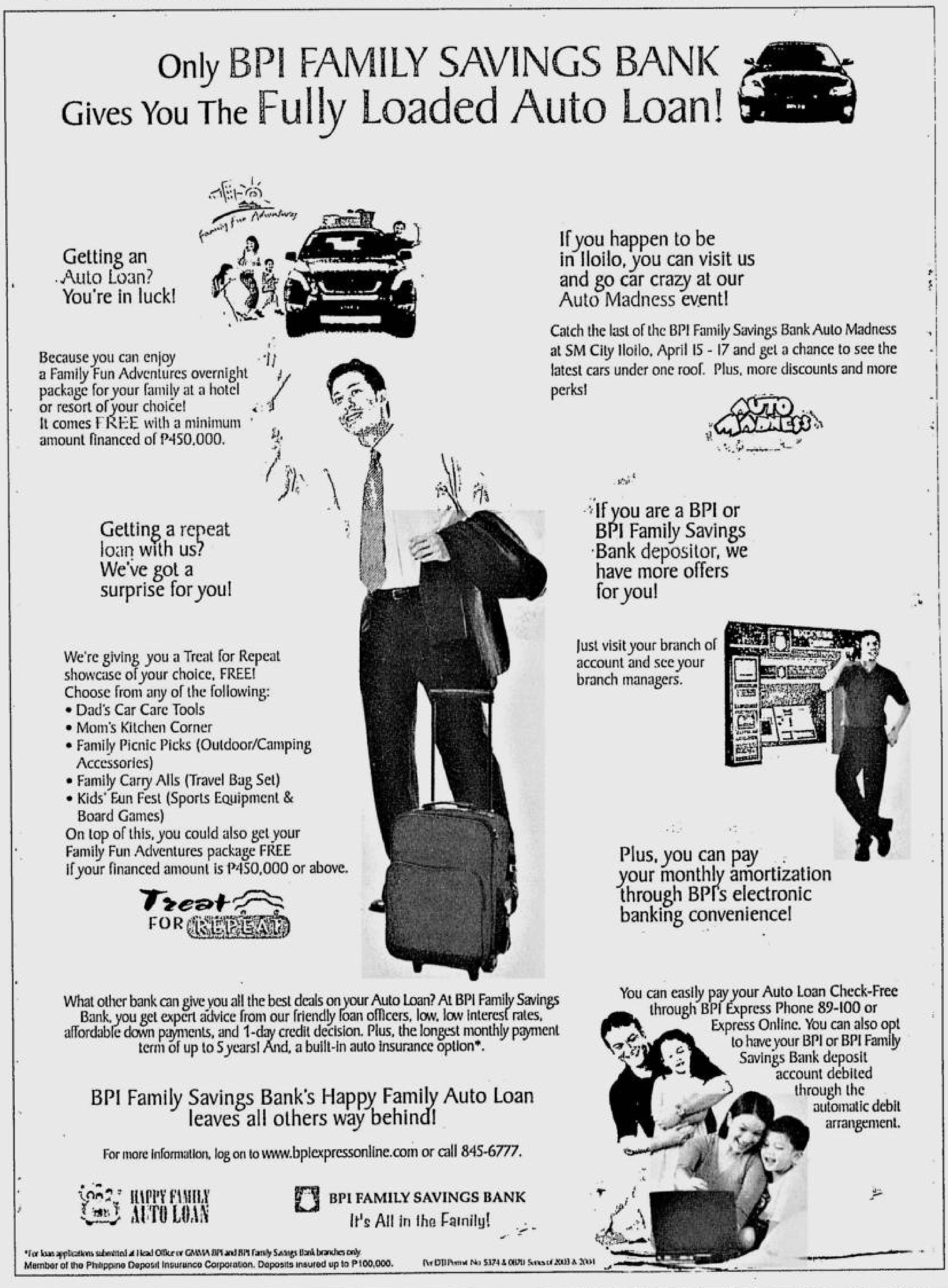
And finally, there is our dear President Macapagal Arroyo who, on Max Soliven's TV program, claimed that P200 million in the Jose Pidal account is not stolen from government and is not bribe money.

Those were "excess campaign contributions that now rightfully belong" to her. That is well and good. But have the donors to her campaign paid taxes? If not, has she paid taxes?

If the BIR would run after these big shots or show proof that taxes due have been paid, hundreds of thousands of people will start paying their taxes.

Commissioner Guillermo Parayno will be a national hero.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is co-chair of the MAP ICT Committee and President of Systems Sciences Consult, Inc. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)



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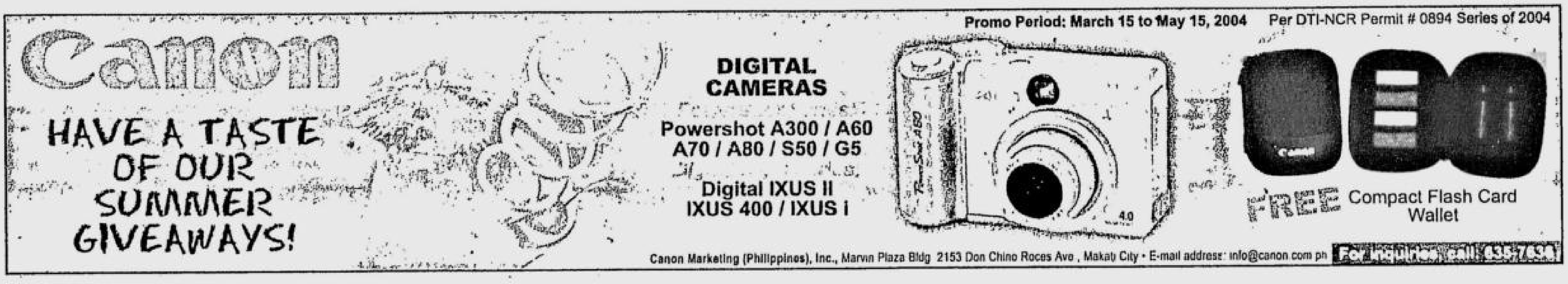

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Wedding, party one-stop-shop opens at The Podium

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Themes & Motifs is widely recognized as one of the most professional and efficient event organizers in the country. It has built its reputation on high standards of quality and adherence to customer service excellence. Two of its biggest events, the biannual Wedding Expo Philippines and Babies n' Kids Fair, have generated satisfied exhibitors and guests alike. Its success has spawned a myriad of copycats of the features and activities that were introduced in these events.

Because of its popularity, Themes & Motifs enjoys the distinct advantage of getting the best, brightest and newest suppliers in these events. It is from this prestigious pool of tried and tested suppliers that Themes & Motifs carefully selects the chosen few that it accredits to be part of its showroom. Its clients, thus, are assured of professional, legitimate, and trustworthy service.

The Podium branch of Themes & Motifs boasts of an inviting and cozy interior by one of the country's foremost event stylists, Dorothy Albert-Cuna. It features the works of several top wedding photographers, the portfolios of some of the best event planners and wedding coordinators, sample wedding gowns from prominent couturiers, elegant banquet setup by Josiah's Catering Services, kiddie party decorations and packages, world-class invitations and stationery, and displays of other special events requisites.

Its friendly staff can assist interested parties in sourcing the appropriate souvenirs, giveaways, packaging and gifts for special occasions such as Christmas, Valentine's Day, or Mother's Day. Furthermore, it can also provide assistance in determining where to begin the special event planning, which supplier to choose, what theme to take, and other seemingly difficult questions that most people get stuck with.

The Themes & Motifs showroom at The Podium is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Call 635-3267 or 371-9783, or visit www.themesnmotifs.com for details.

EMPOWERING THE YOUTH THROUGH EDUCATION

Recognizing the value of education and the benefits it can extend to the nation as a whole, the Philippine Associated Smelting and Refining Corp (Pasar) has subscribed to the Adopt-A-School Program of the Department of Education (DepEd). Pasar said the gesture is in response to the call of the government for assistance from the private sector. To formalize this partnership, an MOA was signed between Pasar and the DepEd recently as Pasar officially adopted Matlang National High School in Isabel, Leyte where the company's smelter and refinery complex is located. Based on the MOA, Pasar shall give assistance to the Learning Resource Program of the school by providing a laboratory room for mathematics complete with equipment conforming to the DepEd and Apex program standards. Shown is Pasar senior vice president for human resources management and plant administration Ricardo G. Santiago signing the MOA with Education secretary Edilberto de Jesus, DepEd regional director Dr. Sol F. Matugas, schools division superintendent Dr. Aurora A. Villarante, and Isabel Mayor Roberto P. Fuentes Jr.

International
Food + Beverage
EXPOSITION MANILA 2004
The Philippines' Leading Food and Beverage Equipment, Products and Services Trade Show
www.foodandbeverageexpo.com

IFBE, CSB TEAM UP FOR 2ND YEAR

After a successful staging of the Young Hoteliers Expo (YHE) at the International Food and Beverage Expo (Ifbe) last year, the College of Saint Benilde-School of Hotel and Restaurant Institution Management (CSB-SHRIM) again renewed ties with Ifbe organizers to hold simultaneous highlights during the upcoming 6th International Food and Beverage Exposition slated June 30 to July 3 at the World Trade Center. The lineup of competitions includes Deli Centerpiece, Flairtending/Best Coffee Concoction, Table Setup, Chocolate Pralines and Cake Decoration. The competitions will be spread out over the 4-day exhibit featuring international and domestic players in the food and beverage industries. For more information about the 6th Ifbe, call 687-0654 or 845-1324. E-mail cut@pacific.net.ph or ifbe@fairsandmore.com or through event website www.foodandbeverageexpo.com. Shown is the MOA signing between TIME Foundation/Fairs & More Inc, organizers of the 6th Ifbe, and CSB-SHRIM. From left: executive vice president of CSB-DLSU Ronald D. Holmes, FMI COO Elaine Garcia-Gatchalian and TIME Foundation Inc president engineer Cesar L. Lim.

Glucerna SR Recipes available

MAINTAINING a balanced diet is a major concern among diabetics. Upon diagnosis, doctors already advise patients to limit their food intake and avoid certain foods that may escalate blood sugar levels or lower it at a risky point. Good thing Abbott Laboratories came up with Glucerna SR, an integral part of diabetics' healthy daily meal plan.

Glucerna SR is a convenient low-calorie meal or snack replacement for diabetics complete with essential vitamins and minerals. SR stands for slow release carbohydrate that results in a lower blood glucose level. It is high in monounsaturated fatty acids (Mufa) that help keep lipid levels in check. Glucerna SR is also lactose and gluten-free with soluble fiber content that is gut-friendly. It is a special 400-gram powder in delicious butter caramel flavor for mixing.

Now diabetics can have alternatives to enjoy Glucerna SR with the Glucerna SR Recipes especially concocted by Abbott to provide patients satisfying meals.

Culinary artist Chef Cholo recently concocted a cooking demonstration of Glucerna SR Recipes for doctors and patients during the Philippine Diabetes Association (PDA) Annual Convention held recently at the Century Park Hotel in Manila.

Chef Cholo said diabetics should follow a strict meal plan of low sugar and high fiber foods. A confessed diabetic, Chef Cholo whipped up delicious recipes for Sweet Pasta, Oven-Roast Tomatoes, Flapjacks, Tootsie Rolls and Fruit Smoothies all using the butter caramel vanilla flavor of Glucerna SR for diabetics' hearty eating.

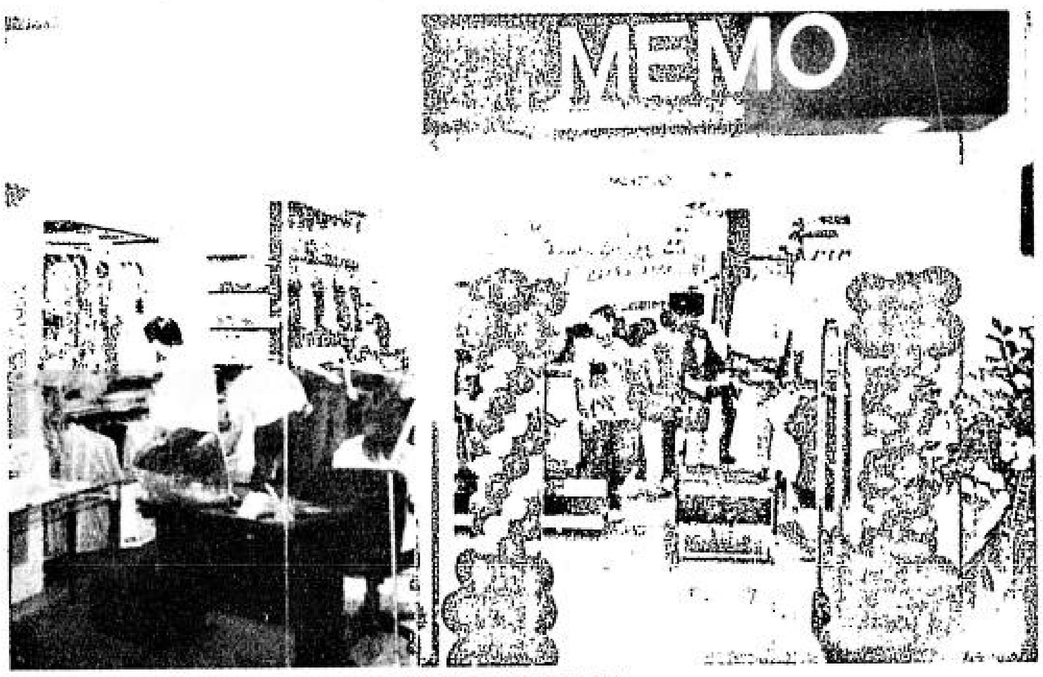
Chef Cholo also advised fellow diabetics to lessen carbohydrate intake and to eat small meals, in an interval of several hours to maintain blood glucose levels (an easy rule with Glucerna SR).

For information on the Glucerna SR Recipes and how it can help you, call home care solutions at 689-0444 or e-mail hcs.ph@abbott.com.

ROTARY CLUB OF UPTOWN MANILA
Cha ebrua 29, 19
R.I. 3810

POSITIVISM PAINTER HONORED

The Rotary Club of Uptown Manila (RCUM) inducted positivism exponent and painter ER Tagle (right) as honorary member during the club's weekly meeting at Manila Diamind Hotel recently. Tagle has been conducting free art lessons among street children of Manila and Makati in cooperation with RCUM. He was a member of the Rotary Club of Manila. Shown, from left, are vice president Rafael Ferrer MD, president Rudy Orino, IPP Chito Maligaya, Henry Pua PP, and AG Mike Yu.



MEMO LAUNCHES MEGAMALL BOUTIQUE

Memo, the newest work lifestyle brand, continues to expand in the metropolis as it formally opened its 6th boutique at the 3rd level, Building B of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. Stylish but unassuming, elegant yet relaxed, Memo is the brand to wear from work to weekend. Designed for the urban lifestyle, Memo carries a wide selection of short and long-sleeved button down shirts as well as slacks in basic hues and sophisticated patterns. Memo also carries shirts and shorts weekend leisure. Memo is also located at Filinvest Alabang, SM Southmall, SM Cebu and SM Pampanga, and Glorietta 3 in Makati City.

F'iorgelato
THE PURE ITALIAN ICE CREAM
Potato Corner

FIORGELATO COOLS UP GLORIETTA MALL

With its 32 classic flavors to choose from, including premium, tropical and sherbet frozen delights, Fiorgelato, the pure Italian ice cream, now perks up Glorietta Mall II 3rd level. Shown from left are franchise owners Debbie Dollete and Cynthia Santiago and Milkin Corp franchise director Lhiza Escanilla. For inquiries, call Lhiza at 524-0384, fax 524-0385, or log on to www.fiorgelato.com. Visit its offices at 1263 Gen. Luna Street, Ermita, Manila.

GALVEZ GOES JAPANESE

Top honchos from Iriya Cosmetics Chemical Co Ltd, one of the leading manufacturers of beauty and skin products from Japan, represented by its president Naoyuki Iritani (right) and head of International affairs Hiroshi Hara (left), strengthens its ties with its Philippine distributor hair guru Tony Galvez during a recent visit at the world-class Tony Galvez Centrum, a 5-story health and beauty complex at 124 9th Avenue near P. Tuazon, Araneta Center, Cubao. The Japanese executives plan to expand sales and distribution of its products as they expressed optimism over the growing business of The Perfect Solution Trading Company, the marketing arm of the Tony Galvez Hair Salon. Iriya Cosmetics Chemical Co Ltd has been responsible for hit hair and skin products such as Narcisse TG10, Bright-Up Facial, Infiltrate Treatment, Shampoo and Rinse, Spiky Ultra Hard and Wet Hard Styling Gels.

Bits Clips

Aliwan Fiesta 2004

OVER 3,000 of the best artists, craftsmen, and performers from all over the Philippines will be vying for close to P3 million in cash prizes as Star City, in cooperation with the Manila Broadcasting Company, mounts Aliwan Fiesta 2004 from April 15 to 17. Aliwan Fiesta, dubbed as the Philippines' grandest fiesta, will be heaping cash prizes for the winners and runners-up of three contests: the Dance Parade competition, Float Competition, and the Reyna ng Aliwan 2004 beauty pageant. The highlight of the event is a gigantic float parade and street dancing competition on April 17, which begins at the Quirino Grandstand and ends at the CCP Complex in front of Aliw Theater. For more information, call 832-6121/22.

Tech show for productivity

THE PHILIPPINES has once again been selected to host the Total Office Products & Services Show 2004 (TOPS '04)—2nd International Office IT, Communication Facilities, Equipment, Products, Accessories & Services Exhibition and Conference to be held from June 10 to 13 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. TOPS '04 will also incorporate VisualComm Expo 2004—2nd International Visual and Audio Communications Technology, Concept Designs, Products and Services Exhibition and Edutech Expo 2004--International Education, Training & Skills Development Technology and Supply Exhibition, organized by Global-Link Business Communication Philippines Inc (GBC), the country's leading trade show and special events organizer (750-8588, fax 750-8585)

Last call for theater enrolment

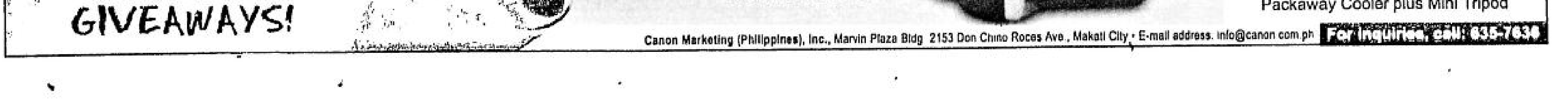
GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation (GTF), in cooperation with the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC), announces its last call for enrolment for its Summer Musical Theater Workshops scheduled from April 14 to May 29 at the Rehearsal Hall of the Concert at the Park Auditorium, Luneta, Manila. Classes are Children's Musical Theater with Sheila Lopez, a music professor and theater actress as the facilitator. For the Musical Theater for Teens and Adults, actor and singer Roeder Camañag is facilitator. Enrollees must bring a 2x2 colored picture. There are few slots remaining per class, and interested workshop participants can inquire at 536-5860 or 528-0603 or visit the GTF office at the 2nd floor, Open Air Auditorium in Luneta. The GTF office is at the back of the Manila Planetarium, in between the Chinese and Japanese Garde, and is adjacent to the Chess Plaza and the Andres Soriano Mass Communications Library.

Gawagaway-an Festival in Cauayan

THE GAWAGAWAY-AN Festival is a unique celebration of the people of Cauayan City, Isabela that traces the ancestry of Cauayeneos from the ethnolinguistic group called Gaddang. Being agricultural valley dwellers and traders, the Gaddangs allowed other cultural groups to be assimilated in their tradition and daily lives. In this year's celebration, the organizer of the Gawagaway-an Festival, through the initiative of the office of the City Mayor Ceasar G. Dy, upholds the recognition of the Gaddang ancestry of the Cauayeneos. The highlight of the 10-day celebration-ongoing until April 13-is the opening of the Festival Center, the festival's main venue. The Festival theme is "Gummuang to Cauayan" (to arrive in Cauayan). For inquiries, call the secretariat Dayang Yraola or Tracey Santiago at 0920-9235615.

CCA Baking course

THE CENTER for Culinary Arts, Manila (CCA Manila) announces its 2004 Summer Programs, including the 2nd run of the Basic Professional Culinary and Baking Course an a series of culinary programs for kids and teens called the Young Chefs Program. The Young Chefs Program is a summer cooking program designed for kids and teens. The Junior Chefs Program is designed for kids 7 to 12 years old (April 12 to 16 and May 3 to 7); the Young Culinary Program-Flavors of East is for teens 13 to 19 years old (April 12 to 16 and will be followed by the Young Culinary Program-Flavors of the West (April 19 to 23). For teens taking both programs, special discounts will be given. CCA Manila will again offer the basic professional culinary and baking course, which will run from April 17 to June 6. For inquiries, call the CCA Manila marketing department at 426-4840/41.


Canon
HAVE A TASTE OF OUR SUMMER GIVEAWAYS!
DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERAS
ZR Series: 60 / 65mc / 70mc
Elura Series: Elura 50mc
Optura Series: 300 / 10 / 20 / Xi
Promo Period: March 15 to May 15, 2004 Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0894 Series of 2004
Coleman General Purpose Cooler or Packaway Cooler plus Mini Tripod
Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc., Marvin Plaza Bldg 2153 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City • E-mail address. info@canon.com.ph For inquiries, call: 635-7634

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Intel Philippines is at the forefront of people empowerment through its various education development programs under Intel® Innovation in Education and community building initiatives under Intel® Involved.

Intel at a Glance

The Early Years 1974-1983

- Started operations in 1974
- First Intel-owned office building set up in Bangkal, Makati City in 1978
- From 24 employees at start-up, workforce grew to 1,500 by the end of the 1970s
- Test operations began in 1983
- Started test and assembly development of Intel's new products and technologies such as thin small outline package (TSOP), erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM), bubble memory, and flash memory.

Growth at Intel Manila 1984-1997

- Production volume and product portfolios increased rapidly
- Intel Manila partnered with the local government of Makati for environmental and waste management, road safety and health education programs.

Intel's Passion for Excellence, Service and Leadership 1998-2004

- Activated new facilities dedicated to advance product packaging
- Inaugurated new site at the Gateway Business Park in General Trias, Cavite.
- By end-2003, Intel ceded all its Makati test and assembly operations and consolidated all production sites within the 120-hectare Cavite site
- The first site to produce Pentium 3 microprocessors to reach 1 gigahertz using the latest technology and the first site to test and assemble Pentium 4 on 12" or 300mm wafers.
- The lead site in the development of Pentium M - the processor behind the Intel Centrino Mobile Technology, and was the first to release Centrino microprocessor, which now drives wireless and mobile technologies worldwide.
- Recognized for its high impact corporate social responsibility initiatives under Intel Involved and Intel Innovation in Education.

Did you know that the Intel Philippines' world class facility in CV is where integrated circuits known as Flash memory, as well as microprocessors and chipsets, are assembled and tested? Flash memory is widely known for its application in cellular phones, and is also an important component in computer manufacturing, automotive control units, digital cameras, photocopiers, games and other household applications. Microprocessors and chipsets are the brains and power of computers.

Under Intel® Involved, Intel Philippines encourages volunteerism among its employees to help build communities and improve the quality of life. Past programs implemented under Intel Involved are coastal and underwater cleanup, waste management trainings, and water conservation campaigns. A great pride of Intel Philippines is the recognition from Intel® worldwide of the site as having the highest volunteer hours.

Intel Philippines' safe work environment, competitive wage and benefits, and highly dynamic professional development programs make it an asset to the Philippines and the Filipino workforce.

Intel Philippines' Asset

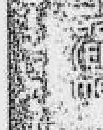
Intel Philippines' real strength and asset is the over 5, 000 highly skilled Filipinos who work in the Cavite campus. Operational excellence and global competitiveness are achieved through the workforce's agility, flexibility and ability to deliver quality products to customers worldwide.

In recognition of this important role, significant investments in the last 30 years have been geared towards people development, encouraging continuous learning with regular training programmes.

Team-building activities are also a common feature, supplemented by the global volunteerism program Intel® Involved, where Intel Philippines encourages employees to donate time and resources in order to help build communities and improve the quality of life.

These activities effectively strengthen the Intel Philippines team and contribute to the overall productivity of the site. In recognition of its excellence in quality and productivity, Intel Philippines was conferred the Grand Champion Award at the International Exposition of Innovation and Quality Circle (IEIQC) 2003 held at Suntec, Singapore. Prior to the IEIQC, Intel Philippines won the Gold Award at the Philippine Regional level of Quality Circle Practitioners Association (QCPA) last May 2003, and another Gold award at the National level sponsored by the Production Improvement Circle Association of the Philippines (PICAP) in September.

INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION OF INNOVATION & QUALITY CIRCLES 2003



MALACANAN PALACE
MANILA

My cordial greetings to the management and staff of Intel Technology Philippines, Inc on your 30th Year Anniversary.

I commend your company for its remarkable growth over the years. Your achievement bespeaks of your vision of becoming one of the Philippines' engine of technologically advance innovation that will help our country in healthy competition with the rest of the world. Your accomplishments, along with those of many other business entities, complement our government's efforts in creating a vibrant business environment and a technology sector that is at par with the world's best.

Your contribution is vital to our country's economic growth and to our program of sustainable human development. I therefore call on you to continue helping our Administration achieve its development goals. Let us continue working together in producing quality goods, in increasing productivity, and in setting loose the full potentials of the great Filipino worker who is sought after in many parts of the world.

Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
MANILA
12 April 2004

Today we are celebrating 30 years of Intel Philippines. For all those thirty years, you have striven to bring the values of excellence and passion to your work, propelling us to the many successes that we have achieved over the years. It is our vision that we will continue to bring growth to our company as well as be a source of pride for this nation through our committed work and by being an asset to our community.

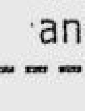
While we continue to strive for excellence in technology and to be the leader in the semiconductor industry here in the Philippines, we have always believed that the reason behind our thirty years of growth and achievement is the commitment and contribution of our people.

Our employees are our greatest asset. They are the key ingredient which gives Intel Philippines it's competitive advantage in the very challenging and fast changing field of information technology worldwide.

So today, we honor our employees and salute them for bringing Intel Philippines to be one of the most productive and successful subsidiaries of Intel and a proud leader among Filipino companies.

Mabuhay!

CESAR V. PURISIMA
Secretary



PEZA

I take pride in extending my warmest felicitations to the Officers and Staff of INTEL TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC. on the occasion of its 30th Founding Anniversary in the Philippines.

Since the establishment of its assembly plant in the Philippines in 1974, Intel has continued its tradition of market leadership through quality, highly innovative and exceptional products.

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) through the Gateway Business Park Special Economic Zone is a proud host to INTEL TECHNOLOGY PHILIPPINES INC not only as one of its most valued locator companies but more importantly as a partner in development particularly in providing additional investments through its numerous expansion projects in the country, creating jobs for Filipinos and generating export receipts for the Philippines.

Because of its significant contributions to the Philippine economy, INTEL TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC. has been the recipient of several PEZA Awards qualifying them to be elevated to the Hall of Fame Awardees of PEZA for Outstanding Exporter and for Outstanding Community Projects. Its other awards from PEZA include the Outstanding Employer Award and the Outstanding Environmental Performer Award.

I congratulate INTEL TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES Inc. for its vision and excellent performance.

Mabuhay!

LILIA B. DE LIMA
Director General

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intel®

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PETER IREDALE
General Manager

Message from Intel Corporation

"Over the past thirty years, employees of Intel Philippines have proven their mettle in a demanding industry, producing both microprocessors an memory chips, and showing their ability to meet challenges with resiliency. Congratulations on your 30th anniversary and thank you for your contributions to Intel's success."

Signed:

Andy Grove	Gordon Moore	Craig Barrett
Chairman	Chairman Emeritus	Chief Executive Officer

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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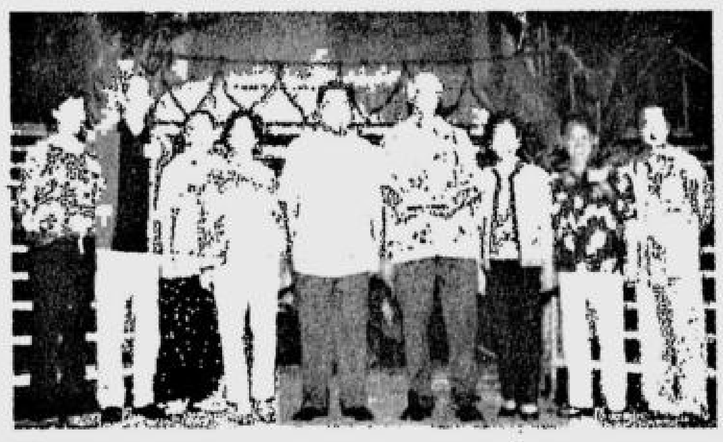

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Your contribution [illegible] country's [illegible] program of sustainable human development. Therefore [illegible] continue help[illegible] Administration [illegible] achieve its development goals. Let us continue working together [illegible] producing quality goods [illegible] increasing productivity [illegible] setting [illegible] the [illegible] potentials of the great Filipino worker who is sought after in many parts of the world.

Mabuhay!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
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Gordon Moore
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Craig Barrett
[illegible] Officer

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- From 24 employees at start-up, workforce grew to 1,500 by the end of the 1970s.
- Test operations began in 1983.
- Started test and assembly development of Intel's new products and technologies such as thin small outline package (TSOP), erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM), bubble memory, and flash memory.

Growth at Intel Manila
1985-1994

- Production volume and product portfolios increased rapidly.
- Intel Manila partnered with the local government of Makati for environmental and waste management, road safety, and health education programs.

Intel's Passion for Excellence, Service and Leadership
1995-2004

- Activated new facilities dedicated to advance product packaging.
- Inaugurated new site at the Gateway Business Park in General Trias, Cavite.
- By end-2003, Intel ended all its Makati test and assembly operations and consolidated all production aspects within the 20-hectare Cavite site.
- The first site to produce Pentium 3 microprocessors to reach 1 Gigahertz using the latest technology and the first site to test and assemble Pentium 4 on 12" or 300mm wafers.
- The lead site in the development of Pentium M — the processor behind the Intel Centrino Mobile technology, and was the first to release Centrino microprocessor, which now drives wireless and mobile technologies worldwide.
- Recognized for its high impact corporate social responsibility initiatives under Intel Involved and Intel Innovation in Education.

Did you know that the Intel Philippines' world class facility in CV is where integrated circuits known as Flash memory, as well as microprocessors and chipsets, are assembled and tested? Flash memory is widely known for its application in cellular phones, and is also an important component in computer manufacturing, automotive control units, digital cameras, photocopiers, games and other household applications. Microprocessors and chipsets are the brains and power of computers.

Under Intel® Involved, Intel Philippines encourages volunteerism among its employees to help build communities and improve the quality of life. Past programs implemented under Intel Involved are coastal and underwater cleanup, waste management trainings, and water conservation campaigns. A great pride of Intel Philippines is the recognition from Intel® worldwide of the site as having the highest volunteer hours.

Intel Philippines' safe work environment, competitive wage and benefits, and highly dynamic professional development programs make it an asset to the Philippines and the Filipino workforce.

Intel Philippines' Asset

Intel Philippines' real strength and asset is the over 5, 000 highly skilled Filipinos who work in the Cavite campus. Operational excellence and global competitiveness are achieved through the workforce's agility, flexibility and ability to deliver quality products to customers worldwide.

In recognition of this important role, significant investments in the last 30 years have been geared towards people development, encouraging continuous learning with regular training programmes.

Team-building activities are also a common feature, supplemented by the global volunteerism program Intel® Involved, where Intel Philippines encourages employees to donate time and resources in order to help build communities and improve the quality of life.

These activities effectively strengthen the Intel Philippines team and contribute to the overall productivity of the site. In recognition of its excellence in quality and productivity, Intel Philippines was conferred the Grand Champion Award at the International Exposition of Innovation and Quality Circle (IEIQC) 2003 held at Suntec, Singapore. Prior to the IEIQC, Intel Philippines won the Gold Award at the Philippine Regional level of Quality Circle Practitioners Association (QCPA) last May 2003, and another Gold award at the National level sponsored by the Production, Improvement Circle Association of the Philippines (PICAP) in September.

INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION OF INNOVATION & QUALITY CIRCLES 2003

MALACANAN PALACE
MANILA

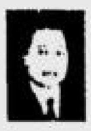
My cordial greetings to the management and staff of Intel Technology Philippines, Inc. on your 30th Year Anniversary.

I commend your company for its remarkable growth over the years. Your achievement bespeaks of your vision of becoming one of the Philippines' engine of technologically advance innovation that will help our country in healthy competition with the rest of the world. Your accomplishments, along with those of many other business entities, complement our government's efforts in creating a vibrant business environment and a technology sector that is at par with the world's best.

Your contribution is vital to our country's economic growth and to our program of sustainable human development. I therefore call on you to continue helping our Administration achieve its development goals. Let us continue working together in producing quality goods, in increasing productivity, and in setting loose the full potentials of the great Filipino worker who is sought after in many parts of the world.

Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
MANILA
12 April 2004



dti
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
PHILIPPINES

Today we are celebrating 30 years of Intel Philippines. For all those thirty years, you have striven to bring the values of excellence and passion to your work, propelling us to the many successes that we have achieved over the years. It is our vision that we will continue to bring growth to our company as well as be a source of pride for this nation through our committed work and by being an asset to our community.

While we continue to strive for excellence in technology and to be the leader in the semiconductor industry here in the Philippines, we have always believed that the reason behind our thirty years of growth and achievement is the commitment and contribution of our people.

Our employees are our greatest asset. They are the key ingredient which gives Intel Philippines it's competitive advantage in the very challenging and fast changing field of information technology worldwide.

So today, we honor our employees and salute them for bringing Intel Philippines to be one of the most productive and successful subsidiaries of Intel and a proud leader among Filipino companies.

Mabuhay!

CESAR V. PURISIMA
Secretary

PEZA

I take pride in extending my warmest felicitations to the Officers and Staff of INTEL TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC. on the occasion of its 30th Founding Anniversary in the Philippines.

Since the establishment of its assembly plant in the Philippines in 1974, Intel has continued its tradition of market leadership through quality, highly innovative and exceptional products.

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) through the Gateway Business Park Special Economic Zone is a proud host to INTEL TECHNOLOGY PHILIPPINES INC. not only as one of its most valued locator companies but more importantly as a partner in development particularly in providing additional investments through its numerous expansion projects in the country, creating jobs for Filipinos and generating export receipts for the Philippines.

Because of its significant contributions to the Philippine economy, INTEL TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC. has been the recipient of several PEZA Awards qualifying them to be elevated to the Hall of Fame Awardees of PEZA for Outstanding Exporter and for Outstanding Community Projects. Its other awards from PEZA include the Outstanding Employer Award and the Outstanding Environmental Performer Award.

I congratulate INTEL TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES Inc. for its vision and excellent performance.

Mabuhay!

LILIA B. DE LIMA
Director General

intel®

Today we are celebrating 30 years of Intel Philippines. For all those thirty years, you have striven to bring the values of excellence and passion to your work, propelling us to the many successes that we have achieved over the years. It is our vision that we will continue to bring growth to our company as well as be a source of pride for this nation through our committed work and by being an asset to our community.

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Peter Iredale
PETER IREDALE
General Manager

Message from Intel Corporation

"Over the past thirty years, employees of Intel Philippines have proven their mettle in a demanding industry, producing both microprocessors on memory chips, and showing their ability to meet challenges with resiliency. Congratulations on your 30th anniversary and thank you for your contributions to Intel's success."

Signed:

Andy Grove	Gordon Moore	Craig Barrett
Chairman	Chairman Emeritus	Chief Executive Officer

The 'myth' behind the feared meat crisis

From page B2-8

sion that has emerged from the small successes in agricultural production and probably the one million jobs program.

Finger pointing

Meanwhile, stakeholders in the supply chain are pointing fingers at each other for high pork prices, albeit they have dipped a little following reports on imports. Each one seems to have his own valid arguments.

Government is often put in a dilemma—left behind scratching its head on how to resolve these inter-locking problems and vested interests.

It could not regulate an already deregulated market as that would run contrary to the existing liberalized or free market policy regime.

On the other extreme, leaving the market alone does not automatically do the trick, given certain imbalances and imperfections in the market.

Government is thus barraged with complaints from some stakeholders, claiming others in the supply chain are getting more than their usual share of the pie.

FOR CONSUMERS, imports can mean lower pork prices.

ERIK ARAZAS

Undersecretary Tetchi Capellan of the One Million Jobs Program says "many would tend to put us in a bind to choose between the interests of the consumer and that of the farmer producer, not to mention the interests of all the players in the supply chain—the feedmillers, hog raiser integrators or backyard raisers, viajero-hog dealers, slaughterhouses, and the meat retailers, and the industrial meat processors."

"We want farmers to profit more on volume production, and not on high-priced margins, thus allowing livestock producers and everyone in the supply chain to also do the same and produce cheaper meat for the consumers," she added.

Grain of truth

On the supply side, hog raisers complain that they are losing owing to the shortage of corn and the ensuing spiraling prices of corn that have increased from P7.50 a kilo last year to over P12 a kilo today.

Statistics reveal, however, that corn production actually rose by a hefty 6.9 percent from 4.32 million metric tons in 2002 to 4.61 million MT in 2003.

This increase in corn output, however, only recovered the 4.55 percent drop in 2002, leaving a net growth of only two percent from 2001 to 2003, still not enough to match rising demand.

The relative corn shortage has created the chain reaction of problems.

Corn imports of 150,000 MT were supposed to arrive in November last year, but disagreements over price and the strong opposition from farmers stopped the importation.

Today, corn volume approved for imports has ballooned to 350,000 MT for 2004.

And they are coming in duty-free, instead of the 65 percent tariff slapped on corn imported outside the minimum access volume (MAV).

It is believed corn imports will not affect much the local farmers as the demand is more than the available supply.

Timing is also important as Region 2 is starting to harvest, and depending on volume production, this may compete with imports.

Feed millers fed up?

Both the feedmillers and the livestock integrators, who process feeds, are affected by the corn shortage.

Nickki Briones, general manager of Limcoma, one of the country's biggest farmers' cooperative, said their production of feeds for hogs has dropped from 200,000 50-kilo bags in 1999 to only 150,000 to 170,000 bags today.

"There is just not enough corn to buy to produce feeds, thus the cutback in production," he said.

Briones added that even San Miguel Corp.'s feeds division has also allegedly cut back production by 30 percent.

If feed millers are affected, the same goes true for the ordinary hog producers who are their main markets.

'Hogs to riches no more?'

These small hog farmers, also called backyard raisers who have 10-20 pigs in their backyards, account for 75 percent of total national hog production.

Albert Lim, president of the National Federation of Hof Farmers Inc. (NFHFI), said "we cannot survive in a price-cost squeeze of rising feed costs and pressures from meat dealers and the market for us to lower our prices."

He said "high costs of feeds is vital as feeds eat up 65-75 percent of production costs."

While cost of corn increased by 60 percent from P7.50 per kilo to P12 per kilo today, costs of other feed ingredients also increased. Soya prices jumped from P12.80 to P20 per kilo as of Jan. 19 alone, and wheat feeds from P7.20 to P10.60 per kilo, he added.

Since January, costs of all feeds and feed additives have increased by another 20 percent.

Manuel "Bambi" Lao, another leader of the hog raisers, said that many of them could not hold their January live-weight price commitment of P82 per kilo.

Owing to the high costs of feeds, many of them are harvesting earlier at 70-kilos per pig instead of 80-100 kilos.

Pressing the meat guys

While meat dealers complain against the hog raisers as they meet the press for their pig holiday, hog raisers argue that government and the public should instead press the meat dealers.

Lim argued that in the past three years, when live-weight prices of commercial hogs went down earlier by 12-15 percent, and for carcass weight (*sabit-ulo*) by 8-14 percent, retail prices of pork allegedly went down by only 2-5 percent.

When prices of hogs dropped from P75 to P60 a kilo, meat dealers did not reduce proportionately but only lowered prices by P4 per kilo and kept their profit band at P20 per kilo.

But when the market perked up starting last Christmas, hog raisers said that while they tried to maintain their live-weight prices of hogs at P82 per kilo, retail prices continued to soar from P110 per kilo last year to P150 per kilo today.

Meat dealers argue, however, that while it is true cost of corn has gone up, they cannot fully understand why prices of hogs in the Visayas and Mindanao cost P20-30 per kilo cheaper.

Hog raisers argue, however, that shipping or freight costs increased four times along with the fuel price hikes.

Moreover, inter-island trading of livestock is discouraged to avoid the spread of foot-and-mouth disease, considering Mindanao and Visayas are FMD-free.

Meat dealers complain hog-raisers are just using the corn shortage as an excuse to raise prices.

Dennis Alturiza of the Hogs and Meat Dealers Association of the Philippines claims many hog raisers have not only increased prices, but have scrapped the traditional decades-old "less three kilos" practice, whereby three kilos from the live-weight sold are deducted to cover the wastes or unusable portions of a pig.

While meat dealers have unfairly deprived some consumers by pulling out 500 hogs out of the 7,000 hogs slaughtered daily in some 21 slaughterhouses all over Metro Manila, hog raisers have also worsened the situation by blacklisting striking meat dealers, thus reducing pork supply and causing the price spiral.

While high costs of corn are pushing up prices, both hog raisers and hog dealers are also partly taking advantage of the strong demand in the market.

Treat or threat?

Amid high pork prices and the pork shortage, government is now set to approve the importation of 10,000 metric tons of pork at a 10 percent tariff amid the clamor from meat processors and pork dealers.

For consumers and industrial meat processors, imports can mean lower pork prices, but for local hog raisers, this is no treat but a big threat to them.

As to how corn imports would affect farmers, this may be another problem, which urban-based consumers may not really care about.

Meanwhile, government cannot seem to please everyone at the same time.

Any move it takes on the pork issue, whether bad or good from whoever's point of view, will always hog the headlines.

But in the end, it is the consumer who exercises his only power and ultimate choice—his purchasing power and right to make a choice whether to buy or not to buy.

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CONDOMINIUMS

Makati City
PALM TOWER
COMMERCIAL UNITS
13 12 sqm, P 402,784.00
14 80 sqm, P 568,320 00
15 25 sqm, P 468,175.00
16 16 sqm, P 496,112 00
17.40 sqm, P 534,180.00
20 30 sqm, P 623,210 00
21.62 sqm, P 663,734.00
24.96 sqm, P 766 272.00
29 19 sqm, P 895,133.00
32 15 sqm, P 987 005 00
35 10 sqm, P 1,077,570.00
46 98 sqm P 1,371,816 00
51.10 sqm, P 1,492,120 00
103 48 sqm, P 3,021,616.00

Makati City
PALM TOWER
RESIDENTIAL UNITS
23 66 sqm, P 958,230 00
24 36 sqm, P 942,732 00
24.48 sqm, P 859,248 00
28.24 sqm, P 1,092,888 00
29.51 sqm, P 1,035,801 00
36.36 sqm, P 1,210 788 00
36 36 sqm P 1,338,048 00
42 65 sqm, P 1,415,980 00
43.20 sqm, P 1,516,320 00
50 18 sqm, P 1,846 624.00
75 15 sqm, P 2,630,250 00
107 04 sqm, P 3,371,760.00

Makati City
BILTMORE
RESIDENTIAL UNITS
72 40 sqm, P 4,199 200 00
72.40 sqm, P 4.409,160 00
72.40 sqm, P 4.199,200 00
82 60 sqm, P 5,046,860 00
82 60 sqm, P 5,046,860 00
82.60 sqm, P 5,046,860 00
131 10 sqm, P 8.416,620 00
131.10 sqm P 8,416,620 00
131 10 sqm P 8 416,620 00
132 sqm, P 8,474,400 00
132 sqm, P 8,474,400 00

Mandaluyong City
ARK
RESIDENTIAL UNITS
37 17 sqm, P 1,014,741.00
21.13 sqm, P 576,849 00
21 85 sqm, P 596 505 00
48 75 sqm, P 1,111,500 00
22 92 sqm, P 522,576 00
38 01 sqm, P 775,404 00
20 18 sqm, P 460,104 00
48 53 sqm, P 1,108,764 00
21 85 sqm, P 445,740.00
21 85 sqm, P 445,740 00
47 83 sqm, P 1,090,524 00
65 33 sqm, P 1,489,524 00
125 46 sqm, P 2,998,494 00
10 25 sqm, P 263,000 00

Pasig City
RENAISSANCE
RESIDENTIAL UNITS
279 sqm, P 7,810,000 00
156 sqm, P 4,212,000.00
182 sqm, P 5,446,200 00
190 sqm, P 5,130,000 00
190 sqm, P 5 130,000 00
118 sqm, P 3,186,000 00
188 sqm, P 5,076,000 00
279 sqm, P 8,366,700 00

San Juan City
ATLANTA
OFFICE UNITS
74 39 sqm, P 2,492,065 00
138 08 sqm, P 5,136,576 00
157 19 sqm, P 6,287,600 00
112 29 sqm, P 4,276,249 00
158 79 sqm, P 6,034 020 00
157.08 sqm, P 5,969.040 00
167.17 sqm, P 6 686,800 00
157 44 sqm, P 6,612,480 00
229 95 sqm P 10 600,695.00
229 61 sqm, P 10,565,198 00

TOWNHOUSES

Quezon City
ISABELLA PLACE
146 sqm, P 2.702,915 00
87 sqm, P 2,002,482 00
85 sqm, P 1,868,265 00
85 sqm, P 1.868.265 00
85 sqm, P 1,868,265 00

Quezon City
GRANWOOD
102 sqm.P2,000,000 00
74 sqm, P 3,600,000 00

Quezon City
LA BREA
150 sqm, P1.914,000 00
180 sqm, P2 428.800 00
184 sqm, P 2,644,800 00
209 sqm, P2.730,700 00

SUBDIVISIONS

Carmona, Cavite
MANILA SOUTHWOOD
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
612 sqm, P 3,060 000.00
563 sqm, P 2,815,000 00
486 sqm, P 2,430,000 00
486 sqm, P 2,430,000 00
505 sqm, P 2,525.000 00
470 sqm, P 2,350,000.00
548 sqm, P 2,740,000 00
609 sqm, P 3,045.000 00
534 sqm, P 2,670 000 00
1000 sqm, P 5,000,000 00

Antipolo, Rizal
PARK RIDGE
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
437 sqm, P 1 092,500 00
605 sqm, P 881,400 00
619 sqm, P 1,547,500 00
640 sqm, P 832,000 00
678 sqm, P1,028,500 00

Sta. Rosa, Laguna
STA.ROSA VILLAGE
HOUSE & LOT
115 sqm, P 821,000 00
125 sqm, P 840,000 00
136 sqm, P 873,000 00
136 sqm, P 873,000 00
137 sqm, P 966,000 00
137 sqm, 966,000 00
138 sqm, 968,000 00
164 sqm, P 1,032 000 00
178 sqm, P 935,000 00
245 sqm, P 968,000 00

Antipolo City
HILLS OF MAIA ALTA
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
153 sqm, P 627,300 00
153 sqm, P 627,300 00
153 sqm, P 627,300 00
160 sqm, P 768 000 00
164 sqm P 754,400 00
168 sqm P 672,000 00
173 sqm, P 761 200 00
177 sqm P 778,800 00
195 sqm, P 858,000 00
201 sqm, P 804 000 00
300 sqm, P 1,230,000 00
306 sqm, P 1,193,400 00
326 sqm, P 1.238 800 00
357 sqm, P 1,356,000 00

Bay, Laguna
ASIA VILLE
RESORT LOTS
175 sqm, P 350 000 00
175 sqm, P 350 000.00
175 sqm, P 350 000 00
175 sqm, P 350,000 00
175 sqm, P350,000 00
183 sqm, P 350,000 00

San Pablo, Laguna
RICHWOOD
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
263 sqm, P 473,400 00
267 sqm, P 480,600 00
271 sqm, P 487,800 00
271 sqm, P 487,800 00

Biñan, Laguna
SAN JOSE VILLAGE
HOUSE & LOTS
126 sqm, P 820,000 00
126 sqm, P 820,000 00
136 sqm P 840,000 00
140 sqm P 970,000 00
197 sqm, P 1 080,000 00

Calamba, Laguna
PALACIO REAL
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
150 sqm, P 405,000 00
183 sqm P 420 900 00
190 sqm P 513 000 00
192 sqm, P 441,600 00
200 sqm, P 520,000 00
215 sqm, P 451,500 00
222 sqm, P 599 400 00
277 sqm, P 747,900 00
279 sqm, P 753,300 00
283 sqm P 735 800.00
287 sqm, P 803,600 00
350 sqm, P 945,000 00
400 sqm P 960,000 00
528 sqm, P 1,425,600 00

Antipolo City
FOLIAGE HILLS
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
177 sqm, P 778,800 00
178 sqm, P 783,200 00
180 sqm, P 756,000 00
182 sqm, P 800,800 00
184 sqm, P 809,600 00
185 sqm, P 814,000 00
202 sqm, P 888,800.00
216 sqm, P 864,000 00
240 sqm, P 1,056,000 00
240 sqm, P 1 056 000 00
240 sqm, P 1,056,000 00
261 sqm, P 1,148,400 00

Bucaue, Bulacan
AYUKIT
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
50 sqm, P 143,710 95
50 sqm, P 143,710.95
50 sqm, P 143,710 95
50 sqm, P 143,710 95
60 sqm, P 172,453 00
100 sqm, P 287,421 90
126 sqm, P 419,635 97
131 sqm, P 376,522 68
145 sqm, P 419,636 00
148 sqm, P 425 384 41
160 sqm, P 459,875 00
179 sqm, P 514,485.19
205 sqm, P 589 215 00
206 sqm, P 592,089 11

Antipolo City
COTTONWOOD HEIGHT
RESIDENTIAL LOTS
212 sqm, P 975,200 00
216 sqm, P 950,400 00
217 sqm, P 868,000.00
230 sqm, P 1,012 000 00
242 sqm P 1,064 800 00
254 sqm P 1 016,000 00
303 sqm, P 1,151,400 00
304 sqm, P 1,276,800 00
325 sqm P 1 300,000 00
325 sqm P 1 300 000 00
359 sqm, P 1,364 200 00
385 sqm, P 1,540,000 00
413 sqm P 1,734 600 00
459 sqm, P 1,744,200 00

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Retail firms . . .

From page B2-3

featuring the best of the Philippine's tourist destinations. It recently successfully ventured into overseas operations, with outlets in the United States and Japan.

Candy Corner

Confectionary shops like Candy Corner, one of the country's biggest, are naturally prone to theft because the items sold are small and easily concealed.

Candy Corner's Bubų Andres says that the company strives to control losses by conducting a regular physical inventory, reconciled with records and surprise audits.

"Over the years, we have developed certain "red flags" or key indicators of internal pilferage such as sudden decline in sales, lack of enthusiasm or change in attitude of team leaders and deterioration of branch cleanliness and overall quality of the branch," Andres says.

She estimates that about 1 percent of its products are lost due to pilferage, both from employees and criminals.

The usual modus operandi are: not writing/listing down sales in receipts, giving away or bringing home of inventory or giving items to relatives or friends when they pass by and pretend that they paid.

Candy Corner is quick to report criminal elements to the authorities, but said the government should do more to help retailers win their war against criminal elements.

"The policy type up the report that you filled out and then just files it, basically. If you file a formal complaint and take them to court, maybe it becomes an active file. Otherwise, there is not enough action," she says.

Candy Corner just does what it can such as having training and regular meetings with team leaders to update them on the different styles that shoplifters employ to get goods. The latest updates from mall administrators are also discussed at length.

She says Candy Corner has no choice but to adopt these strict measures because even just a one-percent loss is too much, considering the level of taxes and the deterioration of the peso against the US dollar.

"How can we afford to have pilferage costs of more than one percent? In the end, if pilferage is too high, we may be better off just leaving our money in the bank, money market or offshore investments to get better returns," she says.

Powerbooks

Bookstores are favorite hunting grounds of shoplifters and Powerbooks, the specialty bookstore of leading chain National Bookstore, is not spared from petty crime. Powerbooks' Gabby Lichauco, however, says that it tries to curb incidence of pilferage by keeping an accurate inventory of its titles.

"Our computer system helps a lot in monitoring inventory movements. Our employees can easily see on-hand quantities on our computers. They can easily double-check if the quantities reflected on the system tally with what we have on the shelves," Lichauco says.

Adding to this security measure is the deployment of personnel who strictly monitor the stores. Without being too obvious, plainclothes guards monitor the perimeters of the stores. Frontline staff are also trained to be vigilant.

"As a result, we have a very small percentage of product loss due to pilferage—less than one percent. We credit this to our efficient inventory, security and front liners," Lichauco says.

Those that manage to get away are usually teenagers. These are out to shoplift just for the thrill or have succumbed to their friends' challenge or dare.

"Those who are caught are asked to buy the item that they shoplifted. Professional shoplifters are brought to the proper authorities. Teenagers who are caught shoplifting are counseled by the managers. We call their parents after, inform them what happened, and ask them to pick up their kid from the store," Lichauco says.

American president . . .

From page B2-8

He stresses that he depends on his team to support him.

"Meetings allow any of us to comment. Everybody has a chance to contribute (ideas to the company)," he says.

"Most problems happen because of lack of communication," he says.

He said when someone in his company commits a mistake, he should admit it and learn to handle it.

Half of American Standard's production is sent overseas.

Siebert is proud of Filipino workers saying that they perform well with regard to "creative technical thinking."

That is why he wants to capitalize on the Filipino workers' technical capabilities.

Siebert also sees to it that American Standard will maintain the edge over its competitors in terms of product quality.

Saniwares, the publicly listed company of American Standard Philippines, has expanded its distribution network and its presence is felt throughout the archipelago.

As the fifth president of the company, he doesn't want to be regarded as just another company CEO who would just leave the company as soon as he finishes his term or assigned to another branch.

"I want to be the best in the eyes of the shareholders and employees." he says.

Siebert has a Business Degree from Miami University in Ohio and did Graduate Studies in Business at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio.

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The 'myth' behind the feared meat crisis

By Michael M. Alunan
Contributor

RECENTLY, there was a "pig holiday" or strike by meat dealers and retailers, who claimed they were squeezed between consumers complaining of high pork prices and hog raisers increasing hog prices.

Was it really a meat crisis? There was neither a tremendous glut in inventory nor a severe shortage, resulting from an epidemic disease that could cause a massive scare and unsold stocks. The crisis was a mere unexpected aberration in market forces, pricing imbalances, or market imperfections affecting stakeholders in the supply chain.

Lessons can be drawn from what had happened and how it can be avoided next time.

The "meat crisis" may have simmered down a bit, but prices have not dropped yet to their original pre-crisis levels.

During the crisis on the demand or market side, many consumers, scared of the bird flu, shifted to pork, creating a surge in demand.

Another reason for the surge in demand is the robust growth in agriculture over the past two years, 4.12 percent in 2002 and 3.77 percent in 2003.

Despite the effects of Typhoon Harurot in the third quarter of 2003, output increases were noted in all sub-sectors, particularly the crops and fishery sub-sectors. In fact, total value production grew by a hefty 6.02 percent to P664.7 billion, says the Department of Agriculture.

This only means, farmers and fishermen had more income, which were spent mostly on food, including pork.

The surge in food demand therefore wiped out pork supplies, pushing up prices.

Paradox

John W. Mellor, in a paper published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), explains that when you have a food shortage, which results in imports, the logical solution is to increase food or agricultural production to wipe out the shortage and the imports.

But in an agriculturally backward economy like the Philippines, an increase in agricultural production, intended to wipe out food shortages, results in more shortages and the need for more imports.

Mellor argues that when higher farm production results in more employment and higher incomes for rural folks, the additional earnings are likely spent more on food, thus the sudden and widespread surge in the demand for costlier food items like meat.

This, in turn, results in relative shortages, which are manifested in higher prices and strong pressures for importation to make up for the shortages.

The surge in demand is more because the consumers coming from the ranks of the farmers themselves have swelled in number—58 percent of the population and two-thirds of those living below the poverty line are based in the countryside.

The DA faces the problem of how to manage growth or expan-

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SIEBERT

American president turns Asian

By Anne Luisa E. Villarico

MANAGEMENT STYLES

WORKING with his Asian associates prompted Thomas R. Siebert to change his work perspective.

"I was results-oriented when I was still working in the US," Siebert says. "I have to adapt to another culture so I became relationships-oriented. There are different expectations for different cultures."

Siebert, an American national, is the president of American Standard Philippines, a joint venture in the country with Sanitary Wares Manufacturing Corp. (Saniwares).

Saniwares is the country's largest manufacturer of plumbing fixtures.

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Avoiding Vietnam

Siebert, 49, says American Standard Philippines was already a well-established company, with a strong market presence here in the Philippines when he took over last year.

Prior to his appointment, he was the general director of American Standard Vietnam, an American Standard joint venture in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, for seven years.

"Vietnam was the country I wanted to avoid," he jests, recalling the American-Vietnam war.

But he says his post in Vietnam exposed him to a far different culture and made him work closely with his management team.

"Personal relationships is the key to making the company succeed (in Asia)," Siebert says.

"I was a team player in the past, and I still see to it that we know what our objectives are," he adds.

This is one of the principles that has not wavered even with his transfer to Asia.

Just like before, Siebert says his team members have to agree on what they are going to do in the company.

Lead by example

Everyone should be accountable for whatever decisions the group will make.

Siebert says as a leader, he has to lead by example.

"We can't just relax. If we have to work until the weekend then we have to," he says.

There is often no choice because of the stiff competition American Standard is facing from newcomers in the business.

Siebert says he is the kind of leader who would do regular follow-ups on the business and keep close track of the market because it changes regularly.

"We communicate closely and build trust on each other, shared objectives for the company," he says.

Siebert adds that he and his management team meet once a week in a non-formal environment.

AMERICAN / B2-7

ENTERTAINMENT
E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

Robin's brod accused of terrorizing resort

Witnesses say Royette Padilla looked drunk and under the influence of drugs

Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

A PREGNANT woman suffered stomach pains after a brother of actor Robin Padilla allegedly ran amuck in a resort in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Royette Padilla, also an actor, also threatened to burn down the Cool Waves Beach Resort in Barangay Wawa, Nasugbu town at about 1 p.m. on Saturday, according to resort manager Myra Cruz.

Cruz, 32, tried to call police, but they had not yet arrived as of press time.

She described Royette as scary-looking as if "he was under the influence of drugs and alcohol."

"We were so harassed," said Cruz, who was almost in tears.

"The resort staff and even the guests were so scared of Royette Padilla."

The pregnant woman is Raquel Corsiga, Cruz's sister. Corsiga, is five months pregnant. She was terrified when Royet harassed her and threatened to kill them.

"He said he would burn the place down and erase it from the map," Corsiga said, "He was so mean, shouting at everybody, telling us to treat him like a VIP (very important person) because he was Royette Padilla."

Corsiga suffered stomach cramps after the incident.

Walk-in guests

She said Padilla arrived at the resort at about 1 p.m. Saturday with 20 male companions. They were on board a boat from the port of Wawa.

"They were just walk-in guests. They already seemed drunk. They went to the resort's store and asked us to cook for them. But we were already closed. We told them we could not cook anymore," Corsiga related in Filipino.

Royette then went ballistic and

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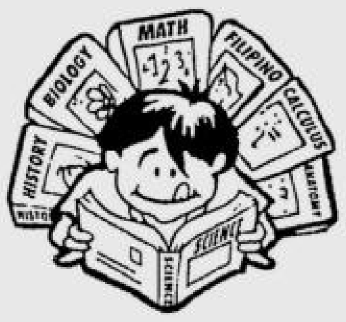

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6			Peter Pan		
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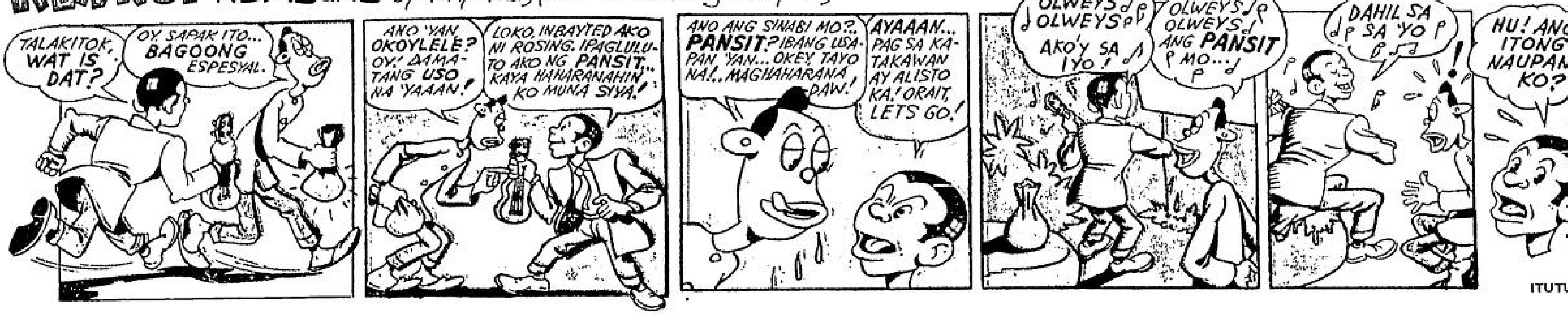
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ITUTULOY

The problem with some stage parents …

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

PEOPLE in show biz have a lot of stories to tell about so-called "stage parents"—the fathers and mothers of child or teen performers.

Some of the stories are upbeat: for instance, **Niño Muhlach**'s dad is praised for having invested the millions his precocious son made when he was the country's top child wonder. One of his wise investments, the El Niño building in Cubao, continues to provide income for Niño now that he's all grown up.

More often, however, stage parents are criticized for pushing their good looking or talented children into the very demanding and difficult world of show business.

Some parents say that it's their kids who plead with them to allow them to become performers. But they appear to be in the minority, since quite a lot of young performers' parents depend on their children to make money for their family.

Indeed, many stars come from impoverished origins, so their relatives ride on their success to pull them out of the pits of poverty.

This isn't so bad when the talent is already in his late teens, but if he's still a little kid, the responsibility is too huge to dump on his frail shoulders, and his relatives deserve to be criticized for their overdependence and lack of personal initiative.

There are young performers who become so busy making money for their relatives and sundry other hangers-on that they have to put their studies—and even their entire childhood—on hold. This is terribly unfair to them, so their insensitive parents should be rapped.

The situation deteriorates even further when the stage parents don't just depend on their child to bring home the bacon, but even mismanage or dissipate the kid's savings.

Show biz veterans have a lot of stories to tell about child stars' folks who gamble their kids' money away—or worse.

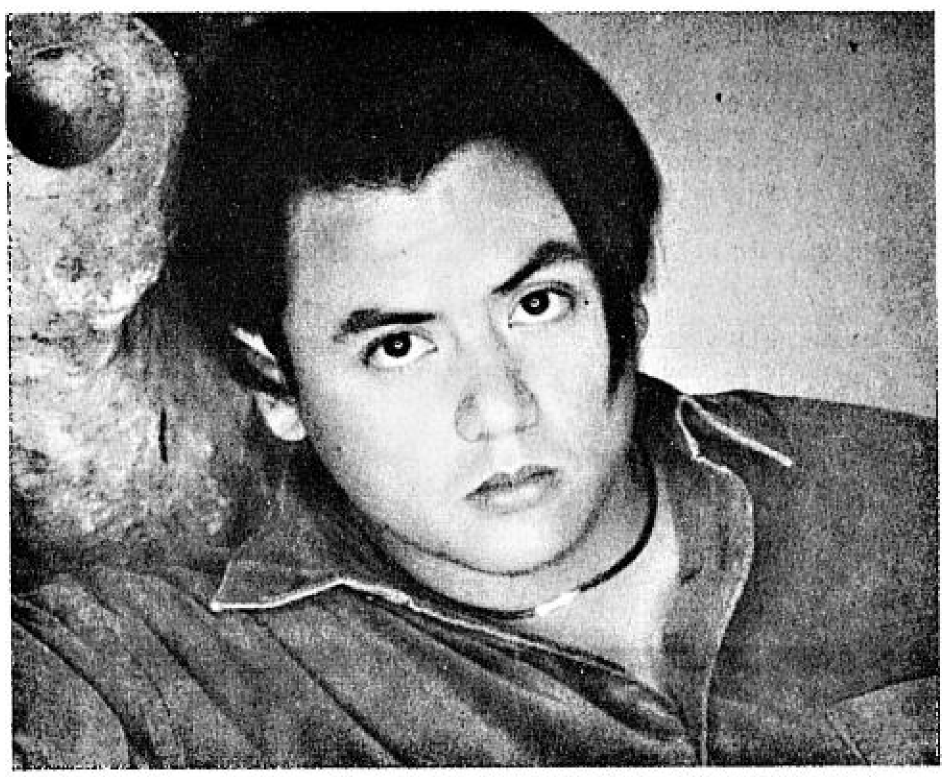
Why do they become so callous and acquisitive? Because the money's good in show biz, and they think that their kids can earn more of it—so, no harm done.

But a lot of harm *is* done, because show biz may be a good milking cow for the present, but it can rapidly dry up when a performer's popularity dips. For many child stars, this happens when adolescence approaches, and some of them can't resume their careers as teenagers.

If they have a lot of savings, this isn't such a major disaster. But, if their folks have squandered their earnings, it's back to the poorhouse for all of them.

This is particularly galling for the young performers, who have been doing all of the work at much too tender an age, while their relatives lived it up as though there was no tomorrow.

The young performers can't be blamed for feeling that they've been betrayed by their own kith and kin. Neither can show biz veterans be criticized for telling such bitchy tales about stage parents who have blithely forgotten the rules and responsibilities of genuine parenting.



NIÑO'S DAD invested the millions his son made when he was the country's top child wonder.

'Day Dream'

LUIS Giraldo's mellow vocals are highlighted once more in his new album, "Day Dream," with its combination of intimate jazz and some Latin standards.

Giraldo has moved from Bogota, Colombia, to Vancouver, Canada, and has performed all over the world. He has toured with Celtic-Rock bands, Latin orchestras and jazz groups, and as keyboardist for pop sensation **Shakira**.

On his new album, Giraldo performs pop evergreens like "The Days of Wine and Roses" and "Cheek to Cheek," and Latin favorites like "Besame Mucho" and "Como Fue."

New comedy treat

LAST Sunday, April 11 at 8 p.m., the new sitcom, "Two and a Half Men," made its debut on Studio 23. Mismatched brothers take on the joint task of bringing up their family's youngest member.

Charlie Sheen and **Jon Cryer** play the brothers, and they team up to rear Cryer's young son after Cryer gets thrown out of the house by his wife.

The result is one big and hopefully hilarious mess. To make things even messier, the brother's controlling mother (**Holland Taylor**) drops in from time to time.

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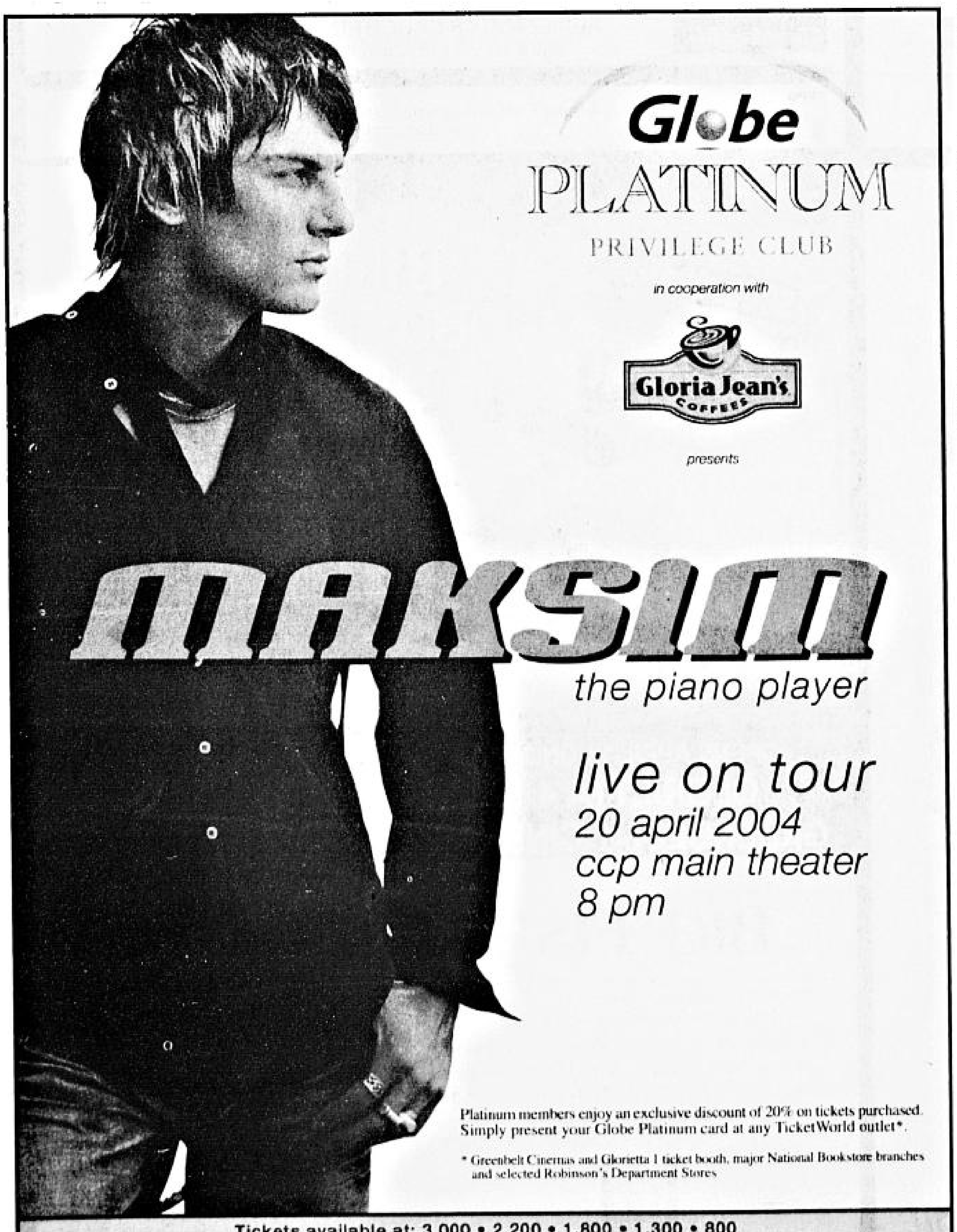
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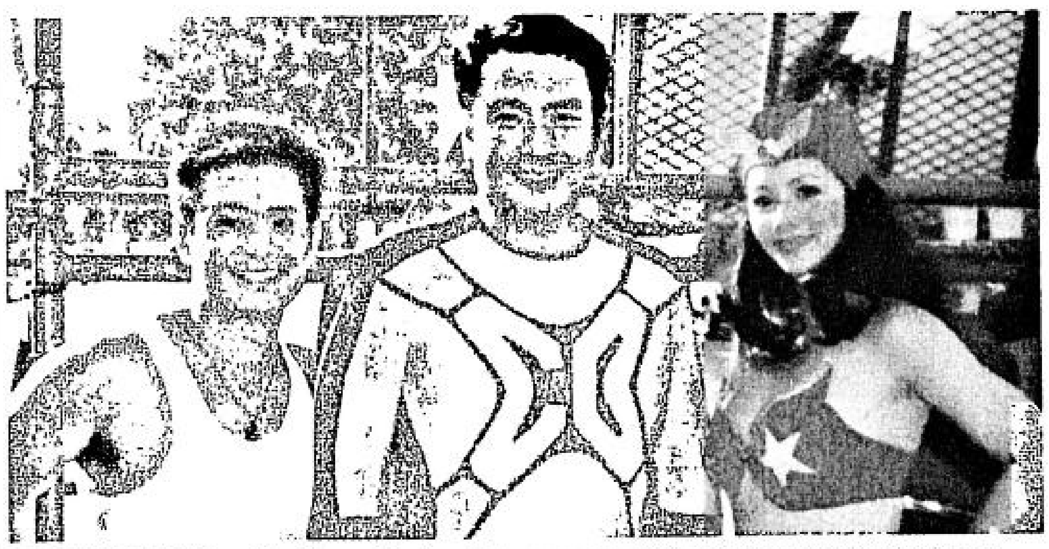
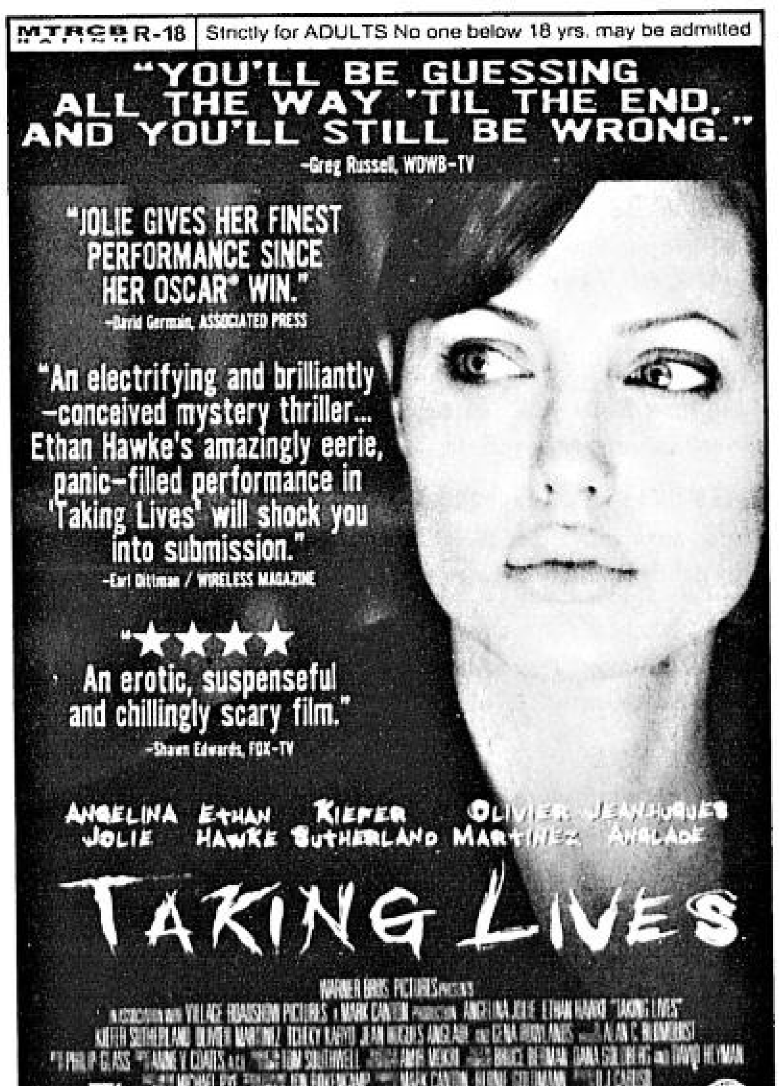


OGIE ALCASID, Bong Revilla and Regine Velasquez are out to save the world in this latest retelling of "Captain Barbell," now on video.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Barbell now on video

THE HIT in last year's Metro Manila Film Festival is now available on original video in video outlets nationwide.

"Captain Barbell," Mars Ravelo's comic book character, is a classic tale of good versus evil. In the latest retelling of the superhero's adventures, Captain Barbell is pitted against Lagablab, Freezy, Dagang Patay and Lobo. He gets help in saving the world from other Mars Ravelo characters like Darna and Lastikman.

Playing Captain Barbell is Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. to Ogie Alcasid's Tenten, who turns into the caped crusader through a magic set of barbells.

Regine Velasquez is the woman torn between Tenten and Captain Barbell.

Piolo flies!

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

PIOLO Pascual plays a bad boy with a heart of gold in his latest *teleserye*, "Mangarap Ka," a mélange of drama, fantasy and action that is a new experience for him.

PIOLO ON FLYING: Interesting but painful because of the harnesses that made it hard for him to breathe

He plays the charming rogue protagonist, Oslec, a street-smart Robin Hood in the gritty streets of Quiapo, Manila. Piolo sees the opportunity to portray a seemingly directionless, angry young man as another welcome chance to flex his acting muscles.

"My character's name, Oslec, is 'Celso' written backwards," Piolo explains. "You'll know why that is so as the story progresses. It's really challenging. All of us actors have roles that are different from our true personalities. Mine is totally different from the ones I've played before because I'm more action-oriented here."

Piolo's character becomes a different being altogether when a Chinoy boy mistakes him for the prophesied "Dragon King" of legend, because of an ornate image of the mythical creature tattooed on his back. In scenes where the boy sees his new friend fighting thugs, computer-generated images of dragons replace live-action footage. This hallucination-like perspective adds an unexpected element of wonder and imagination to the mix.

The Dragon King experience has been fun, says Piolo, as it has allowed him to fly high, literally.

"That was hard," he says of a flying sequence. "I had scars, because body harnesses are tight and you can't breathe in them. I had both lower and upper body harnesses. But it was nice because I've always wanted to fly! It's interesting, even if it's painful."

Playing the seasoned toughie also requires an ongoing training regimen that involves a combination of martial arts called "submission." "It's a mixture of everything," he says. "Kickboxing, boxing, karate, and jujitsu. It's nice because it doesn't have boundaries. As my trainer explains it, you go with the flow of your movements."

It will be explained in the *teleserye* how Oslec was honed in such disciplines.

"I don't have super-powers," he says of his character. "The boy, Tikoy, played by Steven Christian Fermo, will bring change to my life. It's going to be explained in the course of the story why my character is a vagabond."

No action star

Oslec figures in one scrap after another, but Piolo insists that he is not shaping himself up to be the next big action star.

"There are a lot of stunts, action scenes and *bakbakan*," he says. "But I'm not trying to become an action star. I'm just doing it for the project. The show requires certain things to be done by the character. It's just one of his characteristics that he fights. It's one of the spices of the story."

Shooting in Quiapo has sometimes been tough for him and the rest of the cast, since excited fans and curious onlookers keep swarming them. He finds it inspiring, however, to shoot scenes in places such as the Quiapo Church, the Quiapo Underpass and nearby Escolta, since these are populated by different kinds of interesting people. Co-stars playing against type exemplify these characters, like comedienne Nova Villa, who plays a surly fortune teller, and Rio Locsin, who plays a wacky *barangay* captain.

DESPITE the stunts in 'Mangarap Ka,' Paolo insists he's not shaping himself as an action star.

"What's also nice about this series is, every character in the show has its own writer," says Piolo. "*Kumbaga*, everyone has his or her own designated person to watch out for. Everyone is monitored and really well-patterned by (creative manager) *Tito* Ricky Lee and the pool of writers."

Blessed year

He attends "Mangarap Ka" tapings three times a week, and devotes the remaining days to singing and co-hosting the Sunday variety program "ASAP Mania." He is also getting ready for his first major musical concert at the Araneta Coliseum this April.

"After a singing engagement, I go home and sleep because I need a lot of rest," he says. "It's for my voice. We finish tapings in the morning, so I just sleep after that."

His recently released second album, "My Gift," is a commercial hit, following his similarly successful self-titled debut. "It's been a very fruitful year so far, when it comes to my recording career," he says. "Now, I'm doing the concert scene. These are things that I never thought would happen to me. I just feel so blessed."

Art show for 'tweeners' premiers on Channel 23

A NEW show for 'tweeners' will have Epy Quizon and Nina Torres attacking art in a different way.

Epy, son of Dolphy and Alice Smith, and Nina are the hosts of a new and unique educational television show called "Art Jam."

"Unlike other art shows, we will try to be wacky and funny, with a lot of art and a lot of jamming," Epy explains.

The show, which targets the growing tweener market (those aged 9 to 15, grade 4 to second year high school), will premier on April 17, at 9 a.m. on ABS-CBN Channel 2.

"So it will not be too technical," Epy continues.

"We just want to show that with simple things you have around you, around your house, you can create something colorful and beautiful, especially with your junk stuff. You can get something from the junk and then create something beautiful that you can use for decoration," says the Humanities major from La Salle.

The star of "Astigmatism," "Utang ni Tatang," "Radyo," and other cult movie hits, describes a segment for the show where the hosts eat things that they have created.

"We will basically show people how to make food very colorful and very presentable in a very artistic way," Epy explains.

UP Fine Arts student Nina Torres was chosen as Epy's co-host because of her confidence and experience in front of the camera.

Directed by Jon Red with head writer Andrea de los Reyes, "Art Jam" is produced by Claudette Sevilla, who is also behind the award-winning ETV show "Sineskwela."

"Art Jam" is the first art show of ABS-CBN Foundation's ETV Prduction, which is now on its 10th year.

Claudette says the word 'jam' in the title used in conjunction with 'art,' aptly describes the show's intent.

"Jam comes from jamming. When people jam together, they just enjoy doing what they want, whether it's listening to music or singing, playing the guitar, piano, whatever. I also think jam is an in word with the today's bagets."

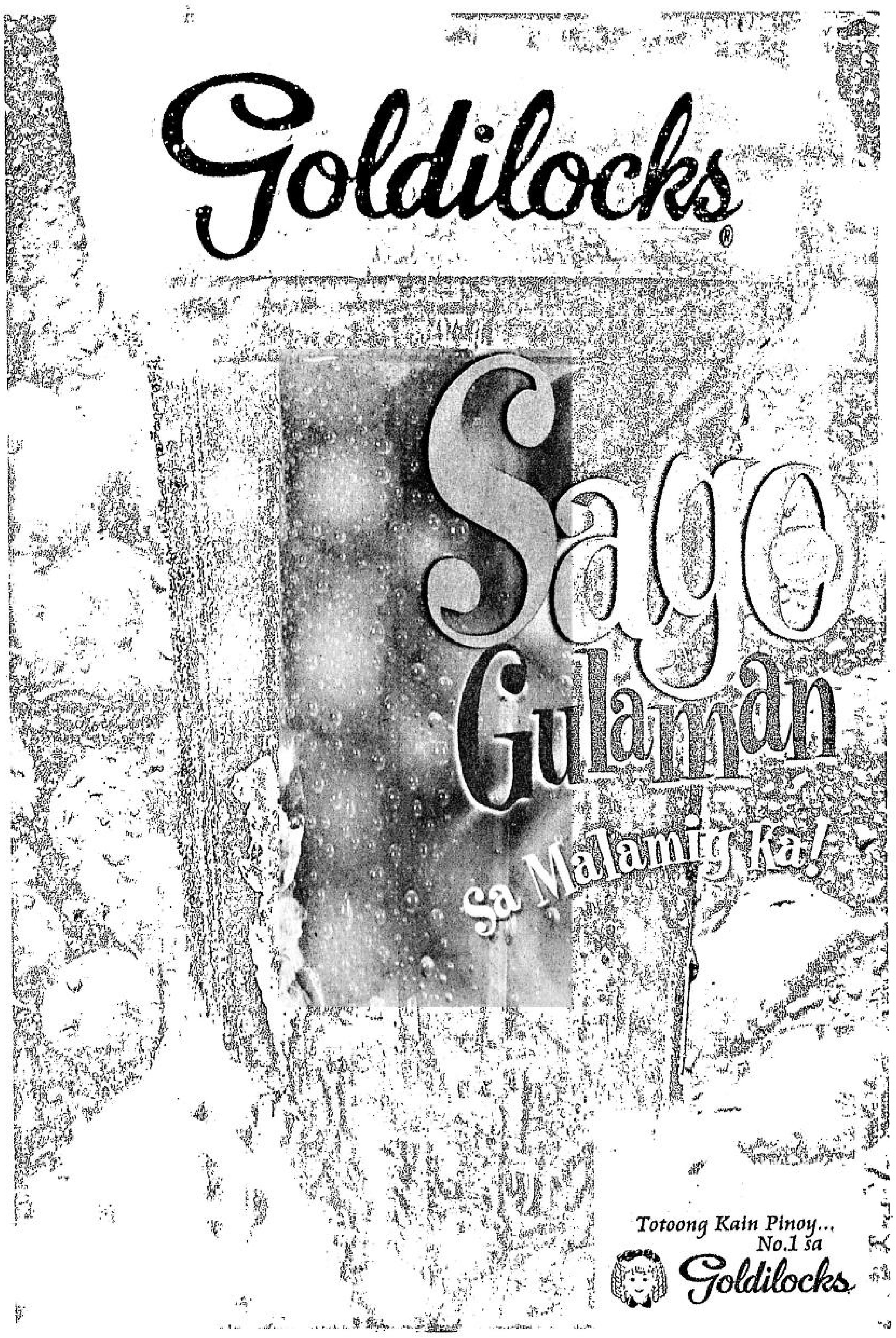
She says the new ETV show has three main segments: playtime, food trip and junk art.

"For the playtime segment, we will come up with activities that we think are fun for this age bracket. For food trip, we have prepared colorful recipes for them to enjoy doing and at the same time, enjoy eating since this is the age when they enjoy eating. For the junk art segment, we will feature art activities that make use of recycled materials," says Claudette

Viewers will also be treated to various "tips" for creative activities.

Dulce F. Baybay, Contributor

EPY Quizon and Nina Torres attack art in a different way.



Nyoy and Mannos reprise Beatles Classics

"YESTERDAY," "Till There Was You," "Hey Jude," "I Saw Her Standing There," "Can't Buy Me Love," "Imagine" are some of The Beatles' hits that Nyoy Volante and Mannos will give an updated flavor in their concert series "NV & M Salute The Beatles."

The series has show dates on April 22 and 23, and on May 6, 13 and 20 at the Republic of Malate.

For inquiries and reservations, call 7003 Dynamix Inc. at 533-8153, 718-0945 or 09179340525; Music Museum at 721-6726 or 721-0635; Republic of Malate at 551-7252 to 55, Tridel Technologies at 636-8050; East Avenue Medical Center Department of Dermatology at 924-8877, 927-7332 (look for April), 813-2659 or 813-2660 (look for Helen) or at 727-6717, 0917566-47-35, 0917566-2955; and 0927361-5924 (look for Crisel, Zeus or Rommel).

'The Diary of Alicia Keys'

MULTITALENTED artist Alicia Keys fully expresses herself with a dazzling array of new compositions featured in the album "The Diary of Alicia Keys." Already a major pop and R&B hit, the album has the hit single "You Don't Know My Name," a track that reflects Alicia's love for the '60s and '70s music.

"When the final album was done, I was ecstatic," says Alicia. "I really felt the energy of the songs, and hearing them as one piece of work, I was able to say, 'yes, this is who I am right now.'"

The album is now out in CDs and cassettes at record bars nationwide.

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
687-6963 • 687-6972
RESERVED SEATING
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Cinema	Movie	Schedule	Rating
1	PETER PAN	11:30, 1:40, 3:50 6:00, 8:10, 10:20	GP
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	12:30, 3:30, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	PG-13
3	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45	PG-13
4	SCOOBY-DOO 2	11:35, 1:40, 3:45 5:50, 7:55, 10:00	GP

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 1:20, 4:00, 6:40, 9:20	PETER PAN GP 1:45, 4:10, 6:35, 9:00	TAKING LIVES R18 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 10:20
THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30	UNINVITED R13 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:10	PETER PAN GP 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL

GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING

Cinema	Movie	Schedule	Rating
CINEMA 1	PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:50, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50	P13
CINEMA 2	PETER PAN	11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50	GP

Special screening of
PASSION OF THE CHRIST on Holy Thursday.
Advance ticket purchase for PASSION OF THE CHRIST is also available. • 722 4496
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

MUSIC MUSEUM

Dates	Show	Time
APR 18, 25	"MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL"	4:00PM
APR 13 14 26 27	"GARY V"	8:00PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

Cinema	Movie
Ali 3	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
Ali 4	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
Ali 5	PETER PAN
Ali 6	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
Ali 7	OTSO OTSO

NEW FIESTA CARNIVAL

Open Daily 4 PM to 10 PM

ARANETA COLISEUM

Date	Event
APR 11	PBA : FED EX VS. RED BULL
APR 13	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
APR 14	PBA : PUREFOODS VS. RED BULL
APR 15	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
APR 16	REWIND PLUS DOBLE REVO DOUBLE PREMYO
APR 17	18TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LORD'S FLOCK
APR 18	PBA : COKE VS. FEDEX
APR 20	NCA 7 - COCK DERBY
APR 21	PBA SHELL VS SAN MIGUEL

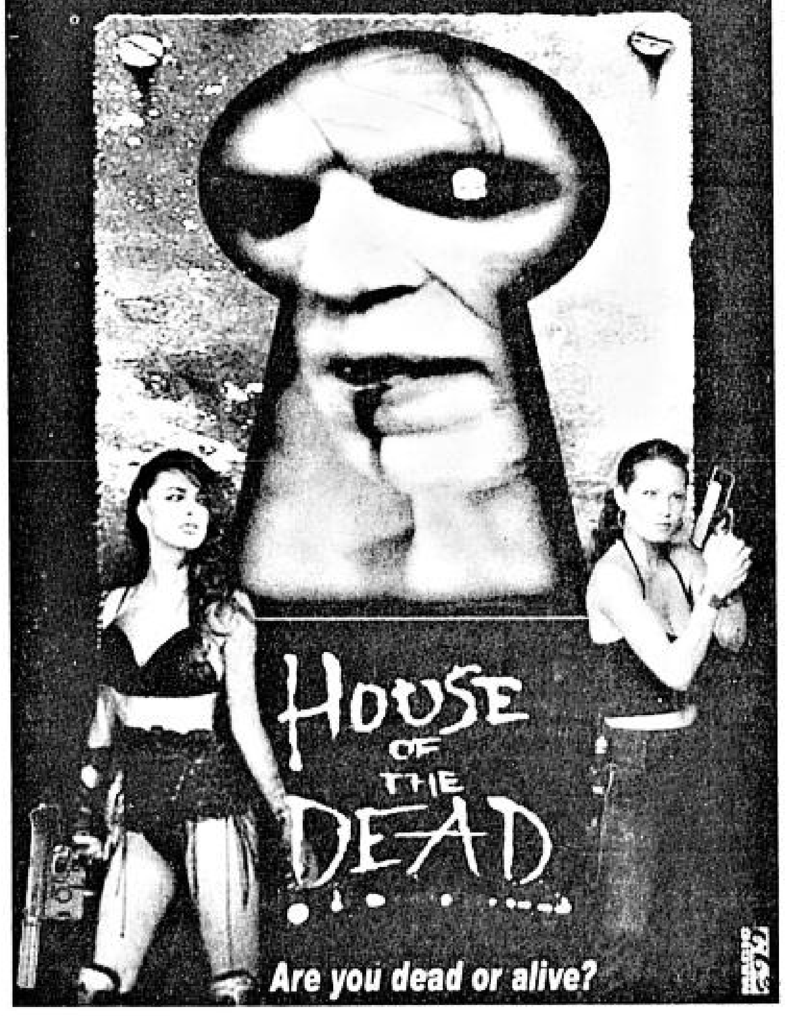
For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

2ND WEEK
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18 | Strictly for Adults. No one below 18 yrs. old may be admitted

Kung nagustuhan mo ang "UNDERWORLD", mas grabe pa 'to sa aksiyon at katatakutan.

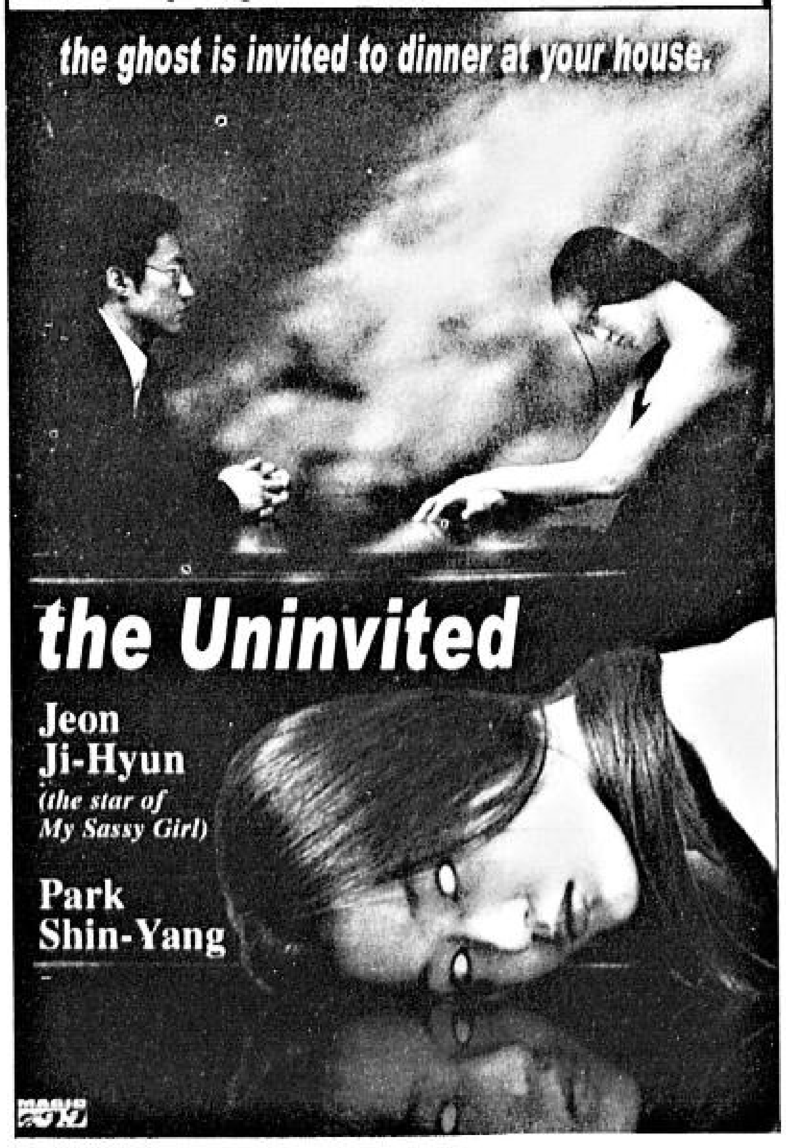
From the company that gave you "UNDERWORLD."

HUMANS vs. ZOMBIES
WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?


HOUSE OF THE DEAD
Are you dead or alive?

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18 | Strictly for Adults. No one but with 18 yrs. old may be admitted

SASAPIAN KA NG MULTO UMPISA NGAYON.
Wala pang mas nakakasindak dito!


the ghost is invited to dinner at your house.
the Uninvited
Jeon Ji-Hyun
(the star of My Sassy Girl)
Park Shin-Yang

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

Theater	Movie
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

Theater	Movie
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	LIGAYA / NANABIK
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

Theater	Movie
A	KASIPING
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

Theater	Movie
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

Theater	Movie
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	KARIBAL
CINEMA-3	MAGNIFICO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HAUNTED OFFICE
CINEMA-6	GRUDGE 2
CINEMA-7	TORQUE
CINEMA-8	HIGHWAYMEN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PASSION OR THE CHRIST
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-12	SCOOBY DOO 2
CINEMA-14	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
CINEMA-15	50 FIRST DATES

LORES

Theater	Movie
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

Theater	Movie
(LAS PINAS)	THE CURSE
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
CINEMA-4	DRAGON VS NINJA

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

Theater	Movie
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA

(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DTS) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 (SDDS) 50 FIRST DATE
3 (DTS) TAKING LIVES
4 GOLD (DTS) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
5 GOLD (DOLBY) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
6 GOLD (SDDS) TAKING LIVES
7 GOLD (DOLBY) PETER PAN
8 SCOOBY DOO-2
9 UNINVITED
10 PETER PAN

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 (DOLBY) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 (DOLBY) TAKING LIVES
4 (DOLBY) PETER PAN

Masagana CINEMA

(Pasay) tel 833.3290 833.3274

1 GRUDGE-2
2 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 PUNLA

starmall Movies

www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 TAKING LIVES
PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) HOUSE OF THE DEAD
5

METROPOLIS star

www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1 VENUS
2 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
3 TAKING LIVES
4 UNINVITED
5 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
6 PETER PAN

M star

www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1 SCOOBY DOO-2
2 VENUS

PREMIERE CINEMA

(Makati City) tel 892.2503
LUCASFILM THX

Centre Plaza Cinema

(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 SHIRI
2 GOTHIKA

Sunshine

(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1
2
3
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City

(Manila) tel 734.8588

5 RESERVE
6
7 (DTS)
8 (SDDS)
9 (DOLBY)

Gotesco Grand Central

(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
2 PETER PAN
3 UNINVITED
4 (SDDS) TAKING LIVES
5 RESERVE
6 (DOLBY) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
7 (DTS) RESERVE
8 OTSO OTSO
9 KARIBAL

Gotesco Commonwealth

tel 951.0083

1 RESERVE
2 (SDDS)
3 (DTS)
4 (DOLBY)
5

Gotesco Ortigas

tel 656.6795

1 HIGHWAY MEN
2 OTSO OTSO
3 (DTS) HOUSE OF THE DEAD
4 KASIPING
5 SCOOBY DOO-2

Universal

(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 RESERVE

Dilson

(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson
Lords

Mandaluyong

tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 UNINVITED
3 TAKING LIVES
4 PETER PAN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA

tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 PETER PAN
3 UNINVITED
4 TAKING LIVES
5 RESERVE

Berma Cinema

(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 OTSO OTSO

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta Center

Ali MALL CINEPLEX 7

Tel No. 911-3101 Loc. 821-8342-8400

1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) PASSION OF CHRIST
4 (SDDS) TAKING LIVES
5 (DTS) PETER PAN
6 HOUSE
7 HOUSE OF THE DEAD

Jade Cinema

(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 DON'T TEMPT ME
3 (DTS) PASSION OF CHRIST
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOOZEN

Cine Nepo

(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1 WISE GIRL
2 PASSION OF CHRIST
3 (DOLBY) CHEAPER BY THE DOOZEN
4 PASSION OF CHRIST

Cine Nepo

(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1 OTSO OTSO
2 GRUDGE-2
3 (DOLBY) 50 FIRST DATE
4 TORQUE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall

(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 TAKING LIVES
3 (DTS) PETER PAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 THE GRUDGE-2
2 (DTS) TAKING LIVES
3 (DOLBY) PASSION OF CHRIST
4 PETER PAN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall

(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 THE GRUDGE-2
2 (DOLBY) PETER PAN
3 (DTS) PASSION OF CHRIST
4 TAKING LIVES

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix

(Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771

1 50 FIRST DATE
2 TORQUE
3 (DOLBY) GHOST HOUSE

Cinema 2000 Metrotown

(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1
2 50 FIRST DATE
3 (DOLBY) THE GATHERING
4 (DTS) SCOOBY DOO-2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1 SCOOBY DOO-2
2 HIDALGO
3 GHOST HOUSE

Lianas Cinema

(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) HOUSE OF THE DEAD
2 KARIBAL
3 VENUS
4 (DTS)

Lianas MovieCity

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) PETER PAN
2 VENUS
3 (DTS) PASSION OF CHRIST
4 TAKING LIVES
5 THE CURSE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema

(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 TAKING LIVES

Olivarez Los Baños

tel (049) 249.2558

1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 TAKING LIVES
3

Mega Center Mall

(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 OTSO OTSO
2 BUFALLO
3 (DTS) HAUNTED OFFICE
4 (DOLBY) SCOOBY DOO-2

Cabuyao

(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS) RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall

(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 DON'T TEMPT ME
2 GRUDGE-2
3 HIDALGO
4 TAKING LIVES

Emperor

(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 BIGLANG LIKO
2 GHOST HOUSE

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

SCOOBY-DOO 2
MONSTERS UNLEASHED
NOW SHOWING

Press freedom saves lives, says Bono

THE PRESS was instrumental in helping to lower HIV rates all over Europe in the 1980s.

This is according to rock star Bono, who now thinks media could play a similar role in combating the pandemic in Africa, where the disease kills 6,000 every day.

In an exclusive interview with the World Association of Newspapers and the World Editors Forum for World Press Freedom Day, the lead singer of U2 said press freedom saves lives.

"AIDS is the worst pandemic in 600 years. People need to know about it to avoid becoming one of the statistics," he said. "The media is our messenger, a modern-day towncrier. China is an example of what happens when there is a conspiracy of silence through censorship. HIV spread like wildfire through certain regions because no one knew about it. A million people with HIV, and only now it gets in the national papers."

WAN and the WEF are distributing Bono's interview through www.worldpressfreedomday.org, along with interviews and features of other world leaders.

The Paris-based WAN, the global organization for the newspaper industry, defends and promotes press freedom worldwide.

It represents 18,000 newspapers; its membership includes 72 national newspaper associations, individual newspaper executives in 101 countries, 13 news agencies and nine regional and worldwide press groups.

Robin's brod accused . . .

From page C1

shouted at the staff and at the guests, who were occupying the cottages near the store.

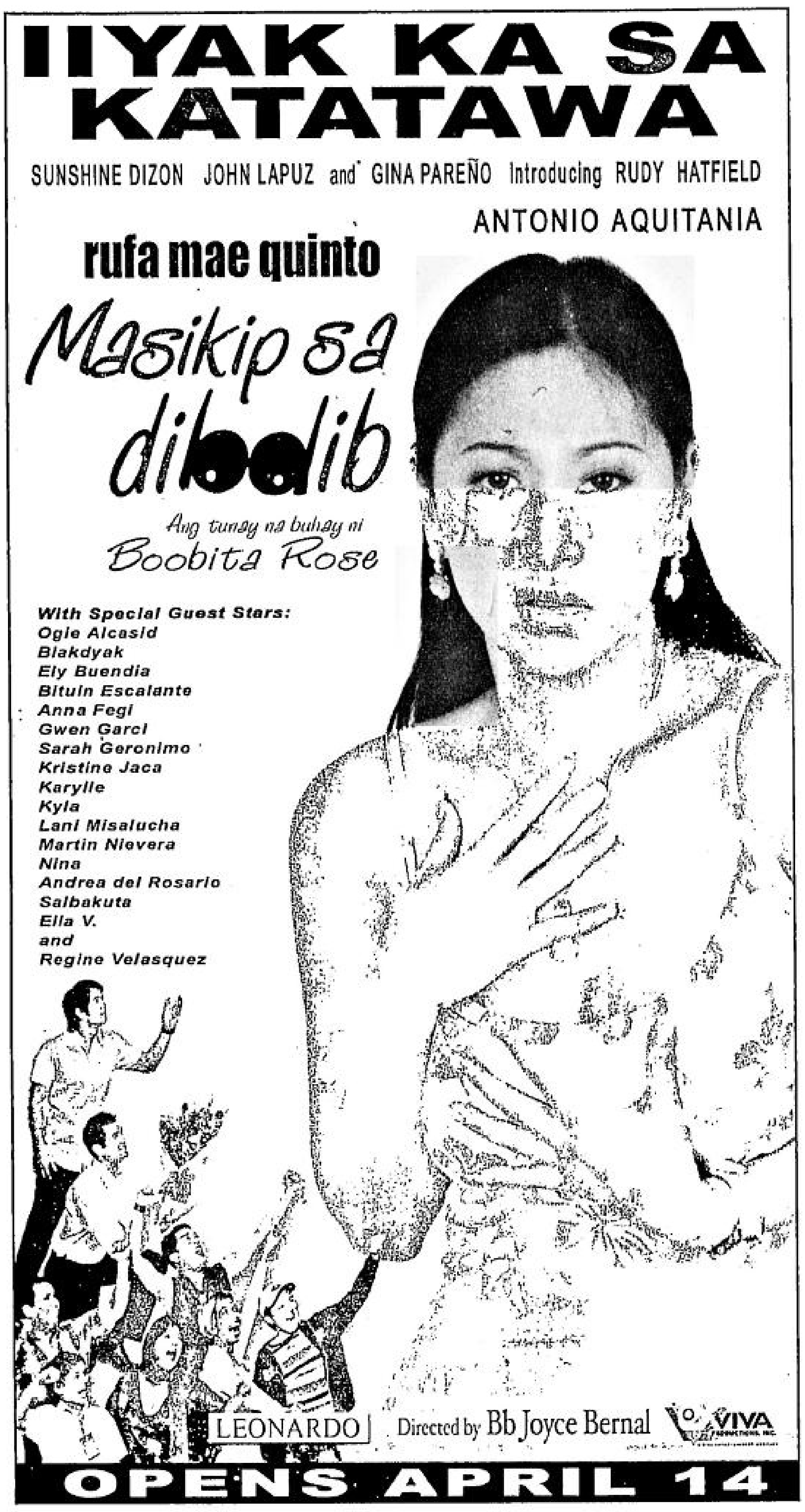
"We were asking his companions to calm him down, but nobody among them wanted to help. They said he was one of the Padilla brothers and they couldn't touch him," Corsiga said.

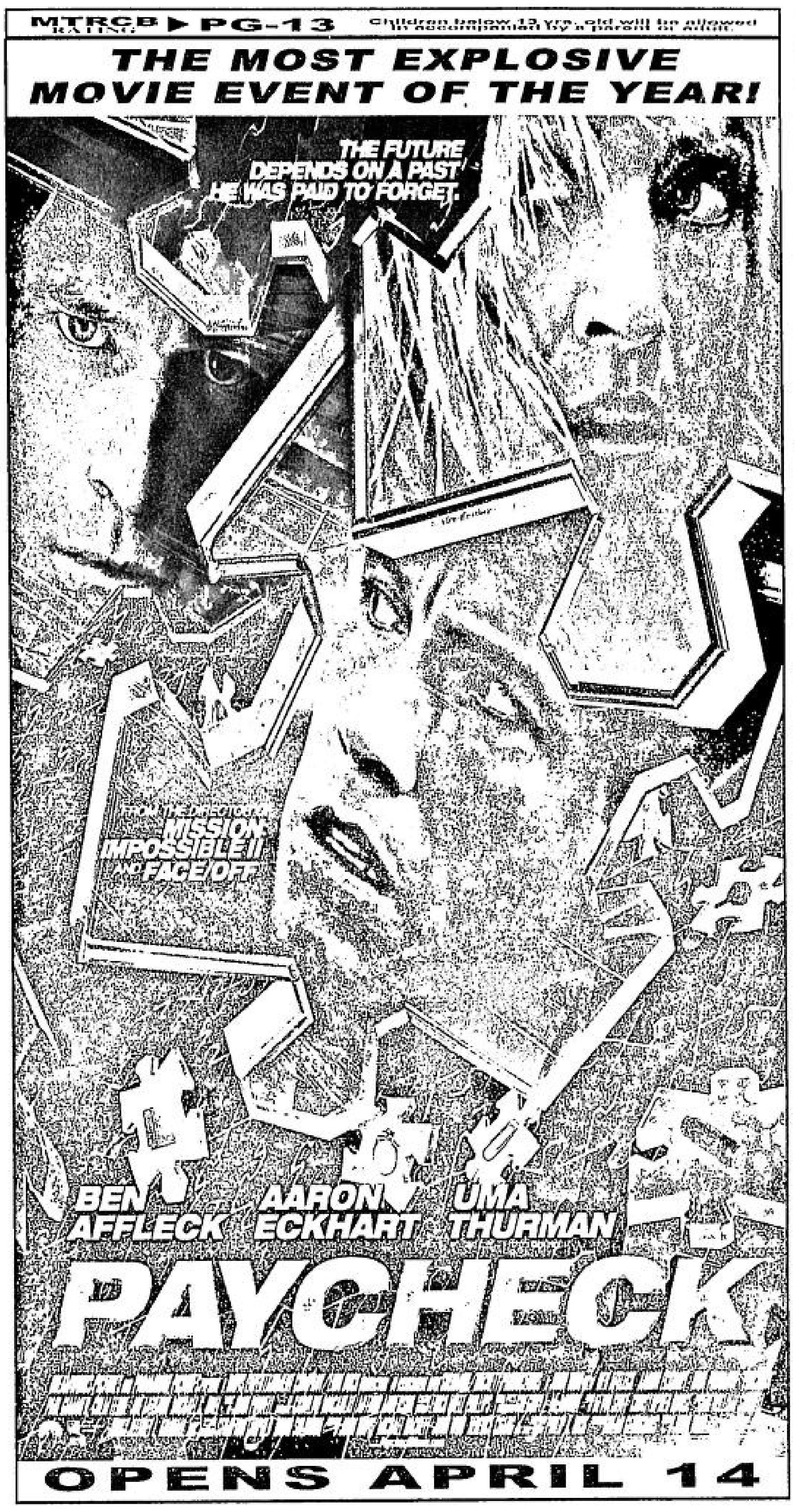
Cruz said that the guests had run out of the resort when they saw Royette was out of control.

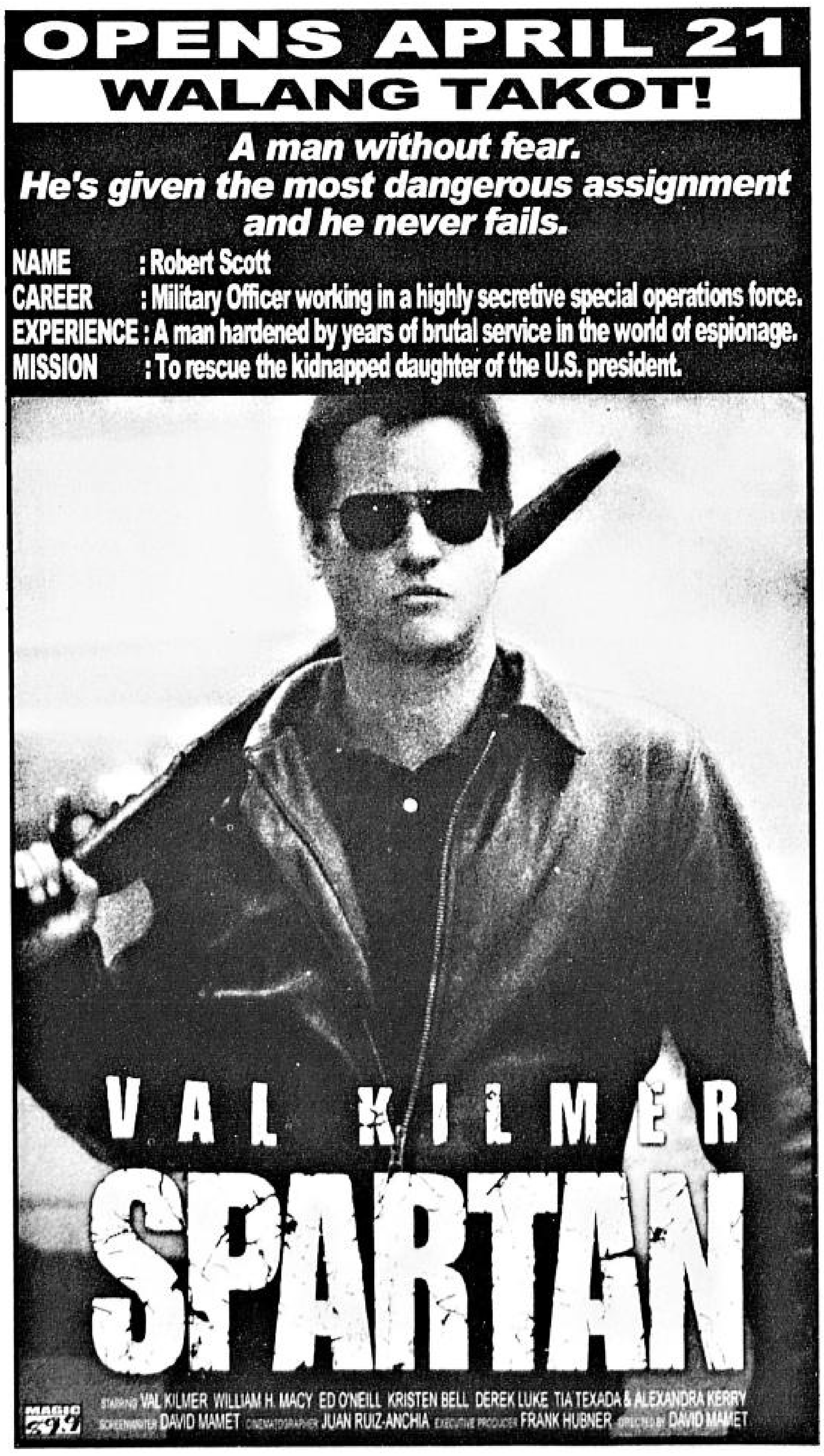
"We lost our day's earnings because of Royette," Cruz lamented. "Today is Black Saturday. The resort was full before Royette came here. Those guests came here because they had reservations. But Royette, who just walked in, drove them away."

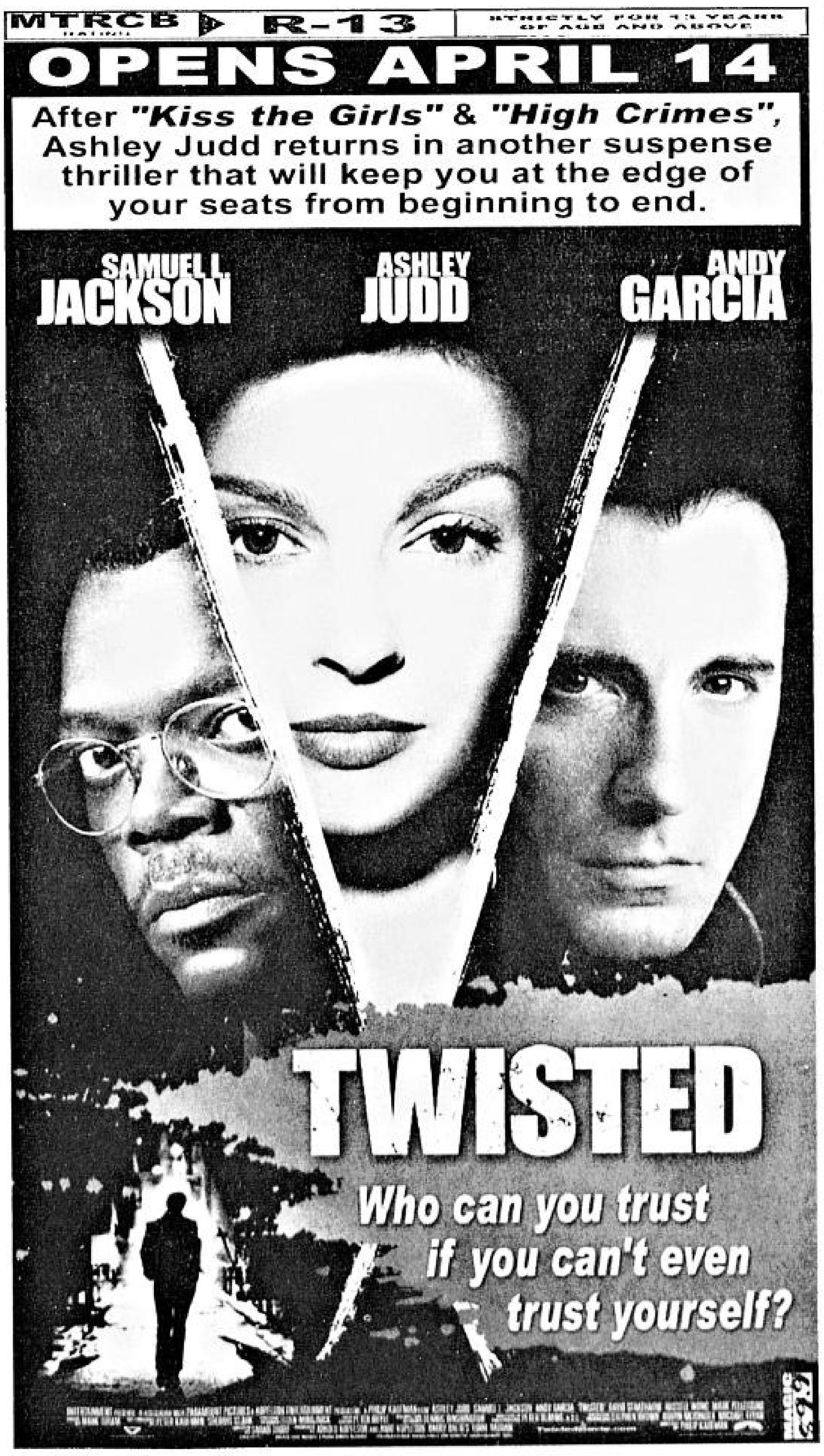
Staffers of former Department of Environment and Natural Resources Sec. Heherson Alvarez, who were at the resort, saw Royette going wild and called police.

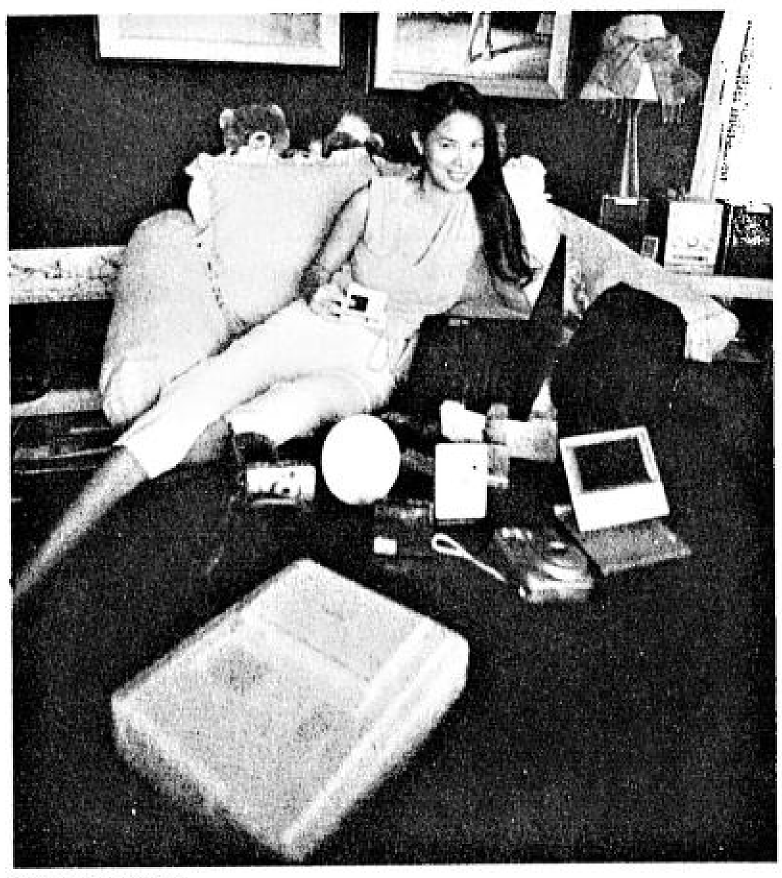
Capt. Valentino Lopez, Alvarez' chief of security, said their itinerary was interrupted because of the incident. They had to stay longer to wait for police to arrive.


IIYAK KA SA KATATAWA
SUNSHINE DIZON JOHN LAPUZ and GINA PAREÑO Introducing RUDY HATFIELD
ANTONIO AQUITANIA
rufa mae quinto
Masikip sa dibdib
Ang tunay na buhay ni Boobita Rose
With Special Guest Stars:
Ogie Alcasid
Blakdyak
Ely Buendia
Bituin Escalante
Anna Fegi
Gwen Garci
Sarah Geronimo
Kristine Jaca
Karylle
Kyla
Lani Misalucha
Martin Nievera
Nina
Andrea del Rosario
Salbakuta
Ella V.
and
Regine Velasquez
LEONARDO
Directed by Bb Joyce Bernal
VIVA
OPENS APRIL 14


MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
THE MOST EXPLOSIVE MOVIE EVENT OF THE YEAR!
THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON A PAST HE WAS PAID TO FORGET.
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE II AND FACE/OFF
BEN AFFLECK
AARON ECKHART
UMA THURMAN
PAYCHECK
OPENS APRIL 14


OPENS APRIL 21
WALANG TAKOT!
A man without fear.
He's given the most dangerous assignment and he never fails.
NAME : Robert Scott
CAREER : Military Officer working in a highly secretive special operations force.
EXPERIENCE : A man hardened by years of brutal service in the world of espionage.
MISSION : To rescue the kidnapped daughter of the U.S. president.
VAL KILMER
SPARTAN
STARRING VAL KILMER WILLIAM H. MACY ED O'NEILL KRISTEN BELL DEREK LUKE TIA TEXADA & ALEXANDRA KERRY
SCREENWRITER DAVID MAMET CINEMATOGRAPHER JUAN RUIZ-ANCHIA EXECUTIVE PRODUCER FRANK HUBNER DIRECTED BY DAVID MAMET
MAGIC


MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13
STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
OPENS APRIL 14
After "Kiss the Girls" & "High Crimes", Ashley Judd returns in another suspense thriller that will keep you at the edge of your seats from beginning to end.
SAMUEL L. JACKSON
ASHLEY JUDD
ANDY GARCIA
TWISTED
Who can you trust if you can't even trust yourself?



PAY PER VIEW. The enterprising star lends her Polaroid, one of the items in her collection, to camera-less fans and charges them P50 per photo.

PATRICIA leaves a Marc, but she's thankful for her ex-boyfriend's help in drawing her out of her shell.

NO HIDING her shapely figure, even in long sleeves

RETURN OF INVESTMENT. A black and gold costume Patricia owns has paid for itself several times over having been worn by the singer-actress in most of her US shows.

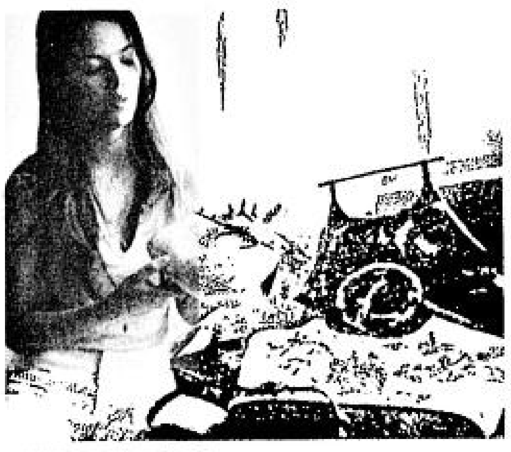
PJ: The revelations of Genesis

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Romy Homillada

ACCORDING to Patricia Javier, it was her former boyfriend, Marc Nelson, who convinced her to do sexy roles to make a name for herself in show business.

But she also credits the TV host and commercial model, who was her boyfriend for four years, of much more than that. "Marc taught me a lot," she says in this interview at her two-bedroom condominium unit in Quezon City. "He helped me build my confidence. Before I met him, I was shy, close-minded and insecure.

"He once told me, 'hey, you have a great body. Why don't you use it?' I thought he was just saying that because he was my boyfriend. But he turned out to be right."



OUT OF THE BAG. She's not into bags, but she keeps a Vietnamese tote for sentimental reasons, and uses a unique Louis Vuitton.

Patricia and Marc met in a commercial shoot. She remembers that she was skeptical when Marc asked her out. "I was thinking that because he was so handsome, I could easily be just the flavor of the month," she says. "But it wouldn't hurt if I made friends with him. Maybe," she adds, laughing, "he could even teach me how to speak English better."

Patricia made her first movie more than four years ago in Lore Reyes and Peque Gallaga's "Ang Kabit ni Mrs. Montero." She has since made other sexy films like "Unfaithful Wife 2" and "Marital Rape," as well as the action-comedy vehicles "Matalino Man ang Matsing" and "Uragon."

Now Patricia is a singer, too. "PJ," her debut album, was released after she took voice lessons from jazz luminary Kevynn Lettau. The album's carrier single, "Siya Ba ang Dahilan?", was recorded right after Patricia and Marc split.

HEELS AND MOUNTAINS. Her shoe rack includes a golden pair she wore in the Bb. Pilipinas pageant, thigh-high boots that she can't stand to wear and her favorite pair of Jimmy Choo.

Patricia says she also learned a lot from the break-up. She claims to be stronger and more mature now. "My partner should be happy with me now," she says.

She admits she's dating "someone special," said to be an American doctor whom she met during her recent US tour.

"We're getting to know each other pretty well," Patricia says of the man. "I want a serious relationship this time. I'm looking for someone who will care for me as much as I will care for him."

PJ has come a long way from being the shy 16-year-old Genesis Canlapan that people used to see every Friday on "That's Entertainment."

"I stayed with 'That's' for two years," she says. "My batchmates included Isko Moreno, Maricar de Mesa and Ara Mina. The competition was so stiff that I was hardly noticed."

She decided to join a beauty contest hosted by Mondragon Industries. "I became one of the image models. For a year, all I did was fashion shows, wearing nothing but underwear. I became used to it, wearing only panties and bra."

OUT OF THE CLOSET

Costumes. "I wore this beaded bra in my first major concert at the Folk Arts Theater. I kept this because among the costumes that were made for me then, this was the only bra that fit me well. Jag had the costumes especially made for me.

"I design most of my costumes. But the black fairy and sexy nurse costumes that I wore for my album pictorial? I got them during my trip to the US. As much as possible, I buy costumes that are not only sexy but have that *matapang* look.

"*Grabe na ang kinita sa akin nitong* black and gold skirt and top *na 'to*. I used this in most of my shows in the US. I wore it for the first time when I performed on 'Asap.' They made me keep it. This really looks good on stage."

Dresses. "I have a hard time buying clothes that really fit me well so when I do find a good fit, I buy it no matter how expensive. I'm big in the chest area but my waist is small.

"Among my dresses, this cheongsam is the most special. If I could only wear it again and again, I would. Marc's mom bought this in Vietnam for me. Marc and I went there with her.

"This white turtle neck dress is another favorite. Marc gave this to me during an anniversary. We bought gifts for each other every month.

"I wore this dress on my music video. I got this from a friend who owns a boutique called Rhapsody. I like the cut. It complements my legs. I feel sexy whenever I wear this dress."

Blouses. "When I go to meetings or other important functions, I prefer wearing long-sleeved shirts. People are so used to seeing me in sexy clothes that they don't recognize me when I'm in corporate clothes.

"If TV appearances require that I wear smart casual clothes, I wear halter tops like this one from Vittorio. I've had this for three years now. I was attracted to it because of its color, powder blue."

Pants. "I keep a few pairs of black and blue slacks. I wear them with my long-sleeved blouses.

"I find it difficult to buy denims because I have wide hips, so I have my jeans especially made. Most of them, *kakaiba talaga*. Jag makes them for me. I choose the designs, like that pair that Britney Spears wore in one of her music videos. Most of them are hipsters and are made of stretchable fabrics.

JAG EDGE. She designs most of her costumes and buys others in the US.

"I like this denim overall. You won't find the like of it anywhere. I first wore this in one of my trips in the States. It's sexy, fashionable and at the same time, warm."

Belts. "I use this black leather belt in some of my shows. I like how its silver dangles move when I sway my hips. But when I'm wearing a dress, I wrap this floral belt around my waist."

Bags. "I'm not really into bags, but for sentimental reasons I still keep this Chinese-inspired red handbag that I bought in Vietnam.

"This Kenneth Cole is my current favorite. My manager gave it to me as a Christmas gift.

"This Louis Vuitton purse is too small to be a bag but too big to be a wallet. I love it because it's unique. I've never seen a similar design here. I bought it in the States."

Techie stuff. "I buy electronic stuff everywhere I go. I listen to the song that I have to memorize on my CD player. I use the minidisc player during my shows. It improves the sounds of a mediocre sound system.

"I also have a Polaroid camera. If fans want their pictures taken with me but they don't have a camera, I use this. I sell the pictures for P50 each.

"I love taking videos, especially of my shows. I want everything documented, so I have this video camera.

"This photo printer is my newest purchase. I think every artist needs this. Your job requires that you be ready with your portfolio anytime."

Accessories. "I like this IWC watch because it's unique. I use it all the time. It's kind of new.

"This butterfly ring was given to me by a special someone. I use it whenever I perform. It looks good when you're holding the microphone. I also have my 'PJ' necklace, my trademark. I wear it in all of my shows."

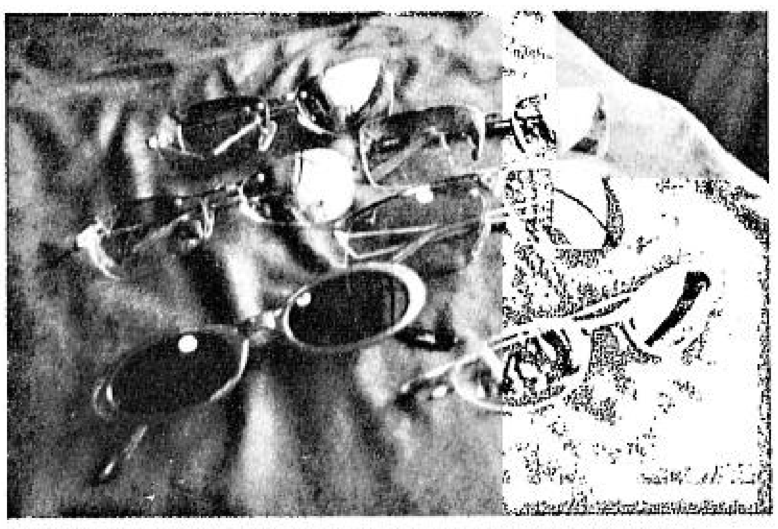
Eyeglasses. "My favorite is my Oakley pair. It's so fashionable. I can wear it anytime, on any occasion. But I also have the flashy kind from Ralph Lauren. It's very J Lo. But honestly, I feel shy when I wear it. *Parang hindi ko kayang dalhin*."

Heels. "I can never throw away this pair of gold shoes. I wore it when I joined Binibining Pilipinas in 1998. I never won any award in that contest, but I got my first break in show business because of it.

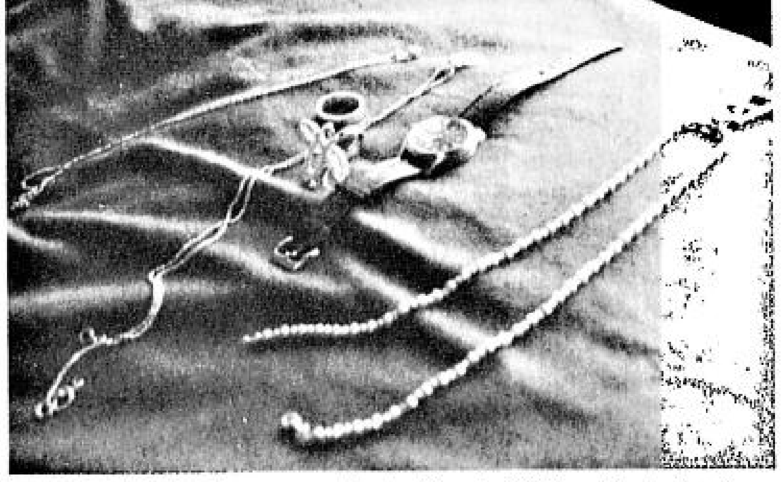
"I also own a couple of Jimmy Choos. They're so comfortable."

Boots. "I can never stand wearing these black boots for more than an hour. They make it hard to move. They go all the way up to my thighs. I only wore them during pictorials. *Pang-baha yata talaga ito eh*."

Rubber shoes. "I don't wear rubber shoes much, but these Nikes are memorable because Jessica (Rodriguez) and her husband (Dave Bunevacz) gave them to me. I wear them when I work out. But for everyday wear, I use my Adidas."



SHADES OF J. LO. She has a Ralph Lauren pair that's "so J. Lo" but she prefers her Oakley.



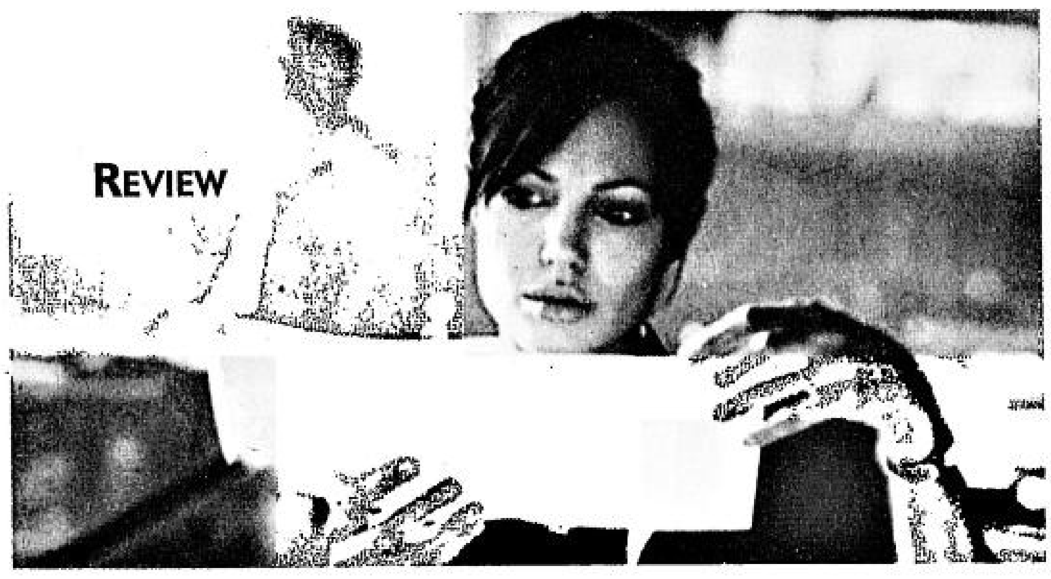
TRINKETS add to her personal style, like the IWC watch, butterfly ring and her trademark PJ necklace.

BEADS AND PIECES. Her show costumes include beaded and other kinds of bras.

We've seen this before, but you can still have a Jolie good time

REVIEW

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor



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Imagine a smart, intrepid female FBI agent thrust into a jigsaw world created by a typically intelligent serial killer. She pries into the murderer's chaotic mind-set, detaching herself from sane reality to understand and anticipate his next move. Her books, years of hard training, and ability to avoid barfing at the sight of mutilated corpses will prove very handy now, that's for sure.

Now imagine Angelina Jolie as that character, FBI profiler Illeana Scott, tapped by the Canadian police to help in a local investigation of a serial killer case. She's beauty and brains in one package, demure and sensitive, with the gift of making every guy twitchy because of her unorthodox clue-cracking methods. She's a gorgeous weirdo not unlike the iconic Dana Scully of "X-Files." Illeana even comfortably eats dinner with gruesome photos of victims in front of her.

So the character is independent and has a strong stomach. So what?

Well, the character's likable, but what are her flaws? What are the juicy tidbits that make her human and someone within our league?

Uninteresting protagonist

Jolie can make anyone believe that she's impervious uber-babe Lara Croft, or any other female character, for that matter. The actress gives every shell its soul and empathic range; she's that talented and charismatic. Heck, you'd even buy her as a sensuous, sassy hacker in, well, "Hackers." So believing she has no wild side here isn't such a big problem.

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Watching "Taking Lives," despite all these oft-revisited paths, is actually bearable. If you're the puzzle-solving type, you might watch out for hidden clues from the start. Even when the film sticks to a series of customary and worn-out ideas, it sets the story up properly enough. You'll get hooked without realizing it. You also won't be able to tell when something is amiss, at least usually.

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Director DJ Caruso ("The Salton Sea") plays up the murder mystery by letting the visuals become the bigger, fortifying part in characterization.

We've seen this before, yes, and while it's definitely not the most original serial killer/suspense thriller movie, it does have its redeeming moments. Hawke and Jolie have this quirky chemistry going for them, too, and it would be interesting to see them together again in a much better film. They take the most run-of-the-mill guises and make them grab your attention longer than they should.

Changing roles

SHOW STOPPER

GAY Jon Lapus is a drug-addicted womanizer who gets a girl pregnant. He has love scenes with three hot babes—Andrea del Rosario, Ella V and Gwen Garci. He even admits that Ella V turned him on.

This is just one of the instances where casting against type worked in the movie "Masikip sa Dibdib," according to its director, Bb. Joyce Bernal.

Jon goes as far as saying that "after this movie, I might just want to be a man."

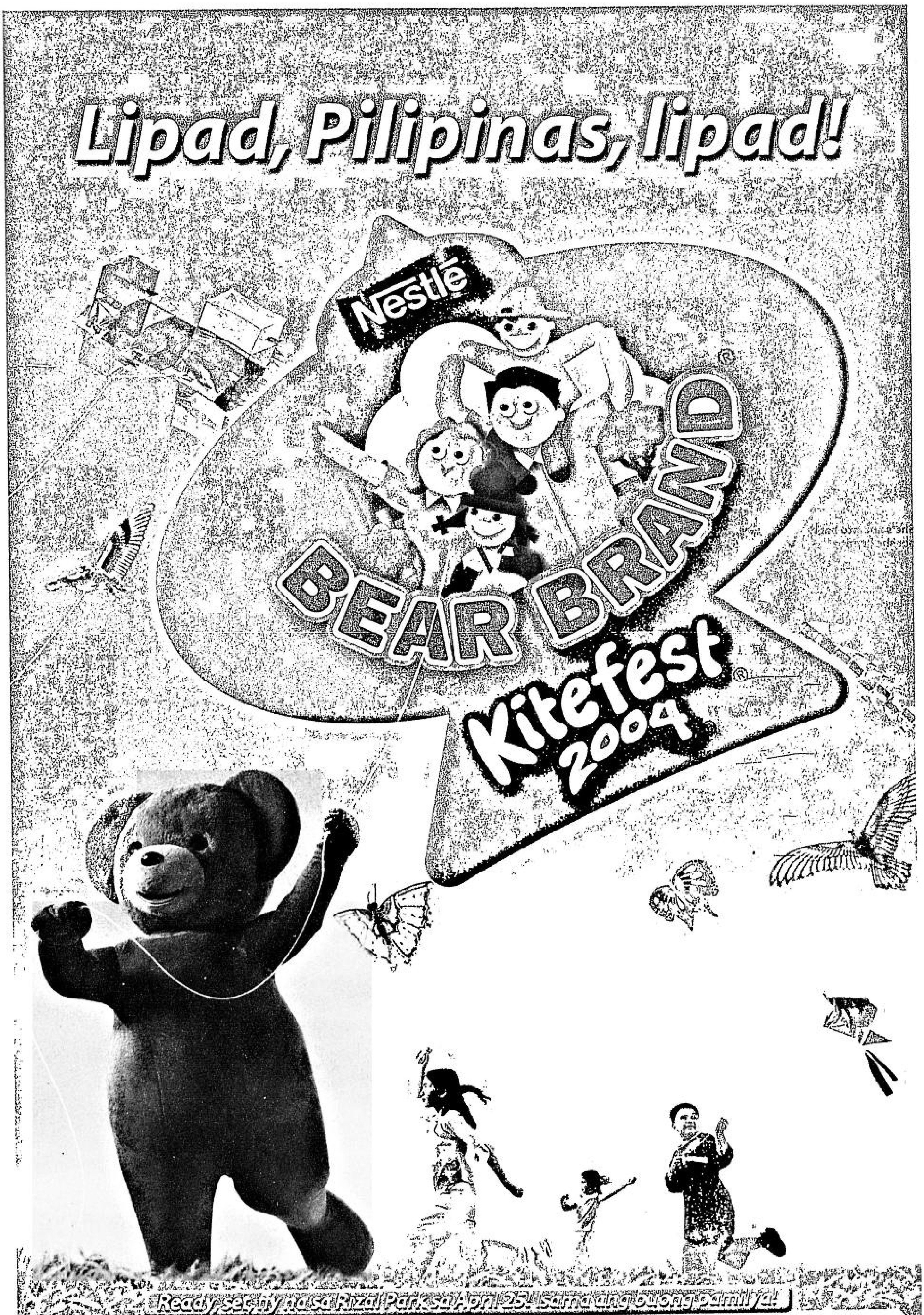
In the role of an alcoholic is Sunshine Dizon, who's known for playing tweetums characters.

"The role is so opposite the real me," she says of her part in "Masikip." "So it's very challenging."

Gina Pareño, veteran dramatic actress, sheds this serious persona and goes weird as the hypochondriac mother of Rufa Mae Quinto.

And Bernard Bonin, the man who popularized the '60s anti-hero, "Palos," tries out comedy for the first time.

"I like it," he says.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Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 1180, series of 200[illegible].

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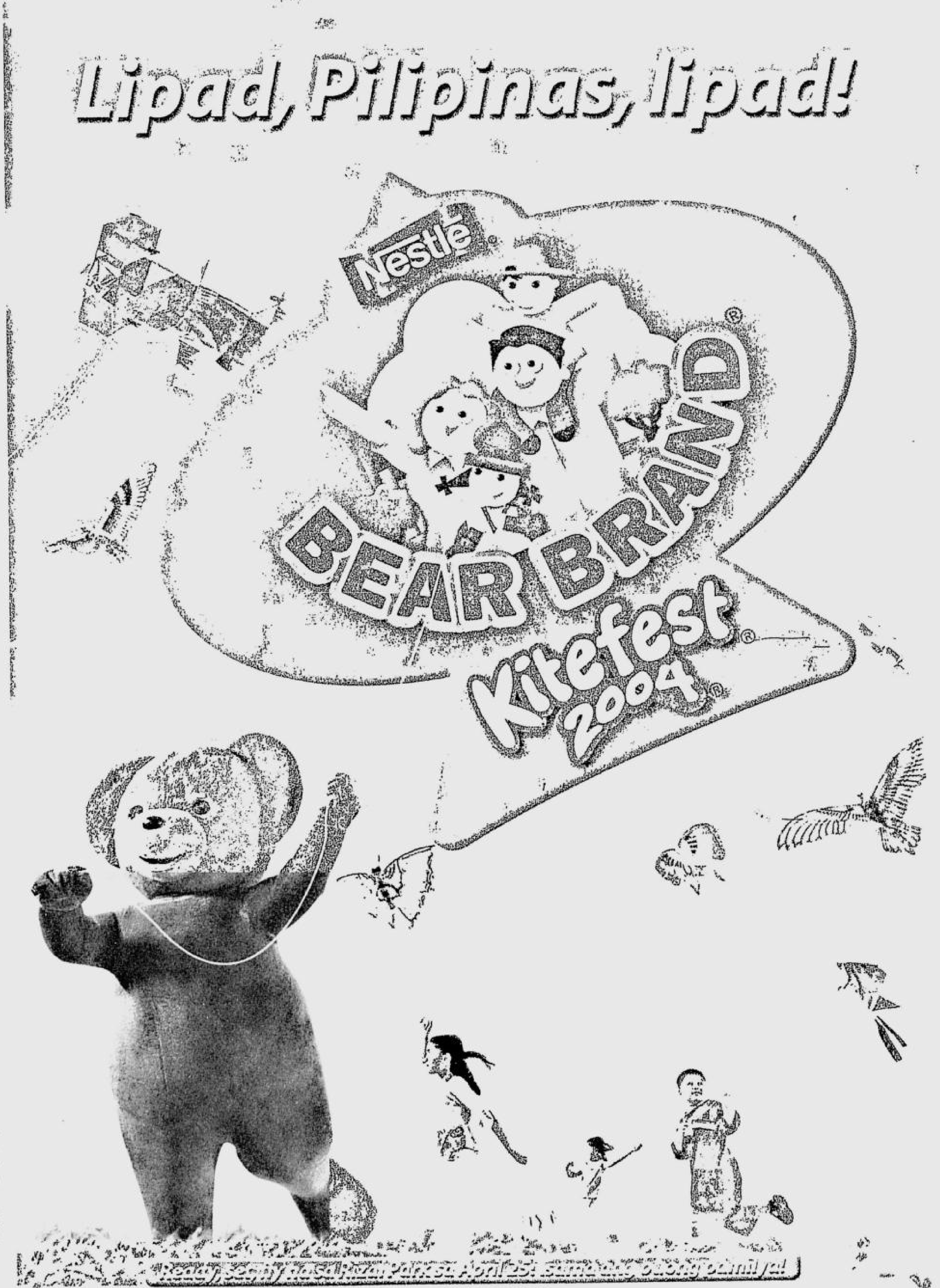
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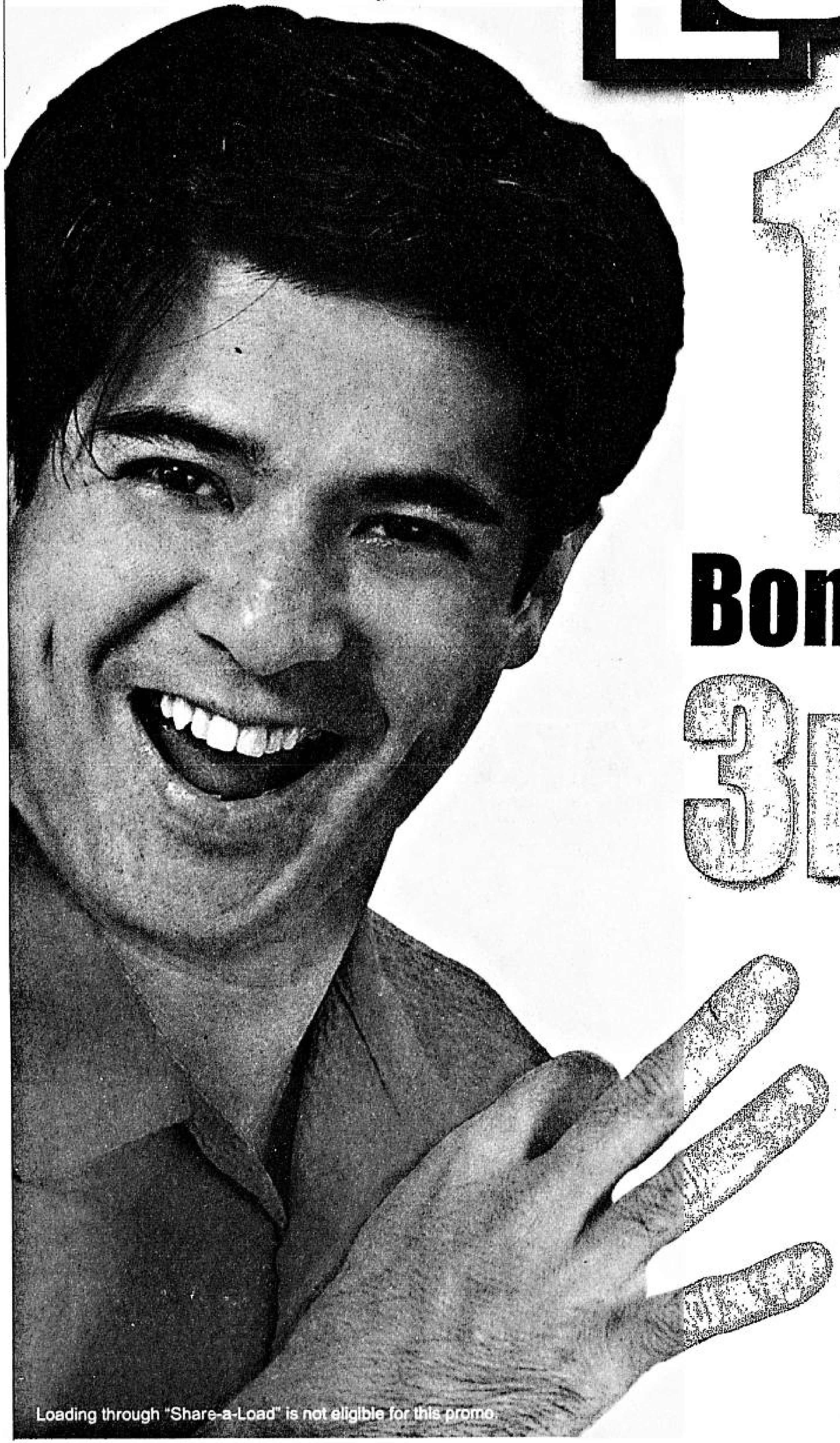

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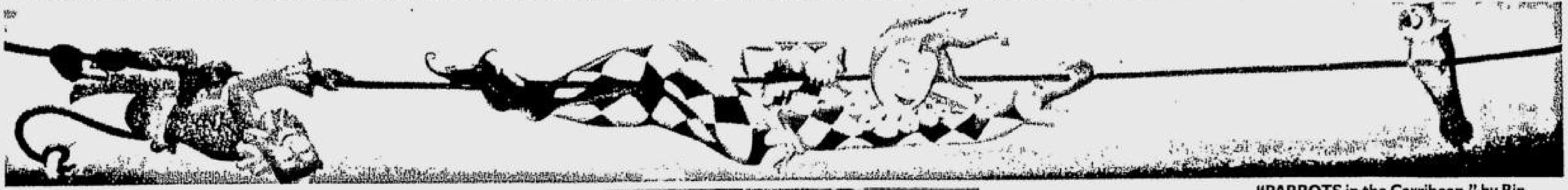
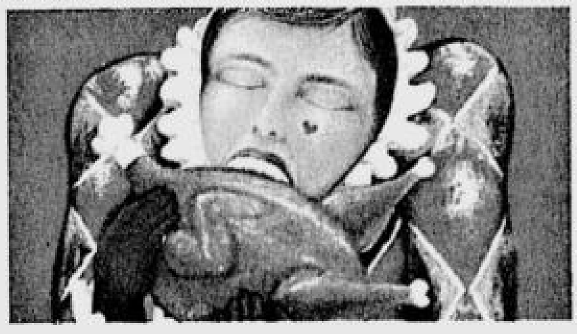
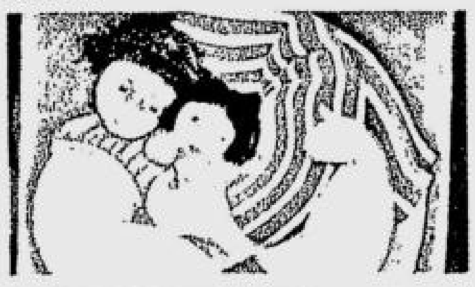


Mirth, girth and the art of wit

Bin Samonte and Dante Palma Tayona show mischief and humor in a joint show





"PARROTS in the Carribean," by Bin Samonte

By Lito B. Zulueta

HUMOR is as Pinoy as *pan de sal,* but it hardly figures in the canvases of our artists. If it does, it is part of a folksy situation rife with comic moments. In short, while the humor may be contextual, it is also incidental. We don't have strict artistic studies of humor.

The rub may be that artistic styles derived from the West hardly accommodate humor. If Filipino artists make a case for humor, it is hemmed in by symbols and references to elsewhere and nowhere. So the humor is Hollywoodized or a witty repartee to a situation already predetermined by Western culture.

Something of an attempt at striking a balance between exploring humor and preventing the exploration to fall into a fossilized academic pursuit of popular culture is made in "Art, Actually," which opens at Gallery Nine in the Art Walk of SM Megamall tomorrow.

The title of the exhibit, derived from the British romantic comedy, "Love, Actually," already warns us that the humor here is double-edged: it is both sophisticated drollness and an earthy sense of farce. The exhibit features the works of Bin Samonte and Daniel Palma Tayona, two artists separated by age but who are joined together by a sensibility that is predisposed toward humor and lightheartedness.

Samonte is younger than Tayona and, although barely out of his teens, his reputation is more firmly established in the art world. A member of the Samonte family of artists of Obando, Bulacan, he has slowly come into his own in the last two years with works that are marked by wit, irreverence, and a little insanity.

Folk humor

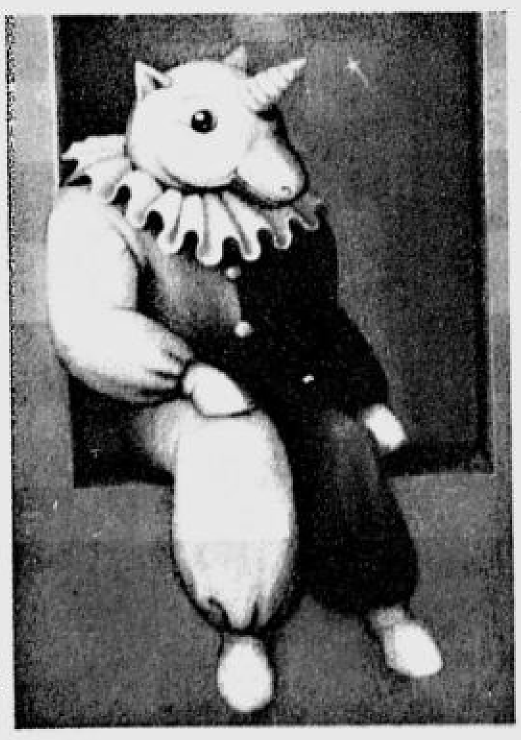
One is confounded by the overriding motif in his works: the figure of the harlequin, which in itself is derivative of the jester in ancient or medieval courts. But one must remember that Samonte has roots in the theater. In Obando, where there's no strict classification of the arts, folk artists generally shuffle from one craft to the other. Samonte and his brothers in fact are all-around artists who take easily to formal canvases as they do to painting jeepneys, tricycles, *bancas* and fiesta buntings.

But it is true Samonte has had a solid training in community theater. Among the Samonte siblings, he is the most precocious, forthright, confident and demonstrative, even stagey.

And stagecraft is the key to his works. His canvases have practically no background, which brings the figures in stark relief, like actors on stage bereft of backdrop so that they monopolize the spotlight and the audience's attention.

Or is the absence of props really a device from the circus? Either way, this artist

MIRTH/ D2



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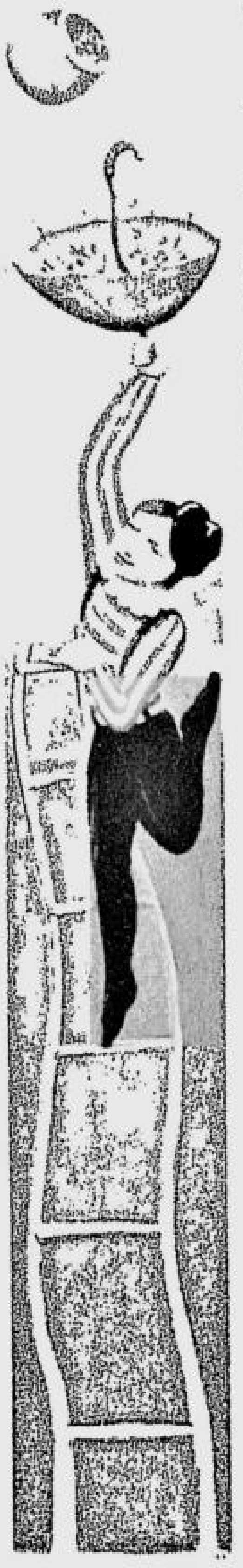


"AT the End of the Rainbow," by Samonte

From page D1

achieves more than gestural effects by the brilliance of his colors and the cleverness of his wit.

Samonte's figures literally hail from the circus sideshow: a harlequin hugs a tightrope together with a monkey and a parrot in "Parrots in the Caribbean" (again, part of the humor derives from the Hollywood punning); a trapeze artist puts up an upturned umbrella to catch coins falling from the proverbial pot of gold suspended in the sky in "At the End of the Rainbow"; a unicorn garbed in a clown's suit looks quite pensive and contented because, as the title says, it is "Free from the Menagerie"; and a contortionist attempts quite a tempest in a teapot in "Dexteri-tea."

Sideshow or not, the works derive their overriding theme from performing arts. In "Swan Lake," a ballet dancer pirouettes as she balances a totem of eggs, presumably the swan's. In "Noodle Dance," a dancer in clown's garb displays his skill in kneading noodles; and in "Chicken a la King," a clown tearfully devours a fried chicken.

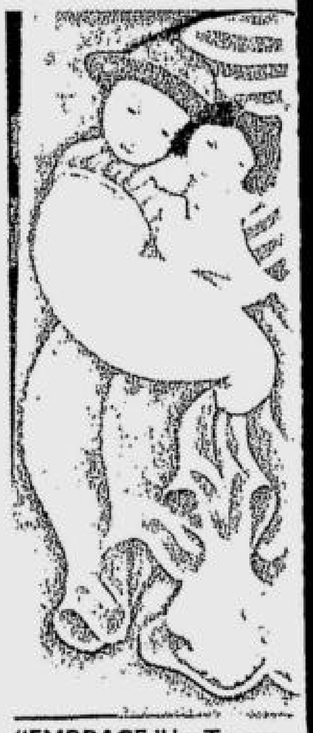
The other motif here is the cat, usually grinning in Cheshire way, as in "First Act with Act" and "Mirage." The latter is particularly funny as the cat, with a unicorn horn, sees a fish in midair, a metaphor for the mischief of the imagination, which perfectly characterizes Samonte's deft art and playful sensibility.

Weighty art

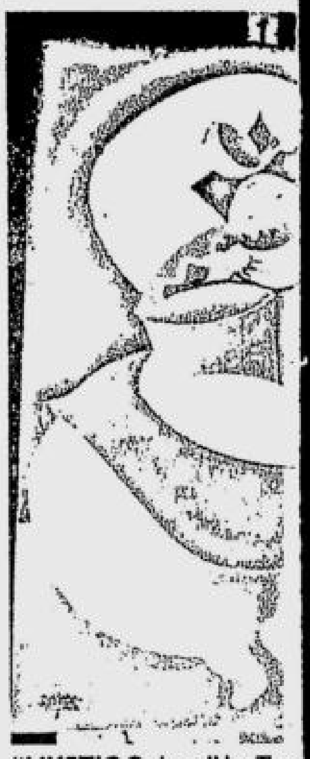
Tayona came from graphics and communication and has only recently started to paint full time. His canvases are distinguished by a ready focus and uncluttered air, the better for the audience to grasp his message and art immediately.

The humor in this case derives from his penchant for bulbous, even obese figures that conjure shades of Botero. In "Soya and Son (Magtataho)," the father and son figures are joined not so much by their trade but by their girth. In "Embrace," fat partners struggle with the flesh, literally; in "Mystic Quiver (The Cook)," a cook gets a dose of her own medicine; and in "Square Dancer," a man in the traditional uniform of square dancing looks hardly square what with his globular figure.

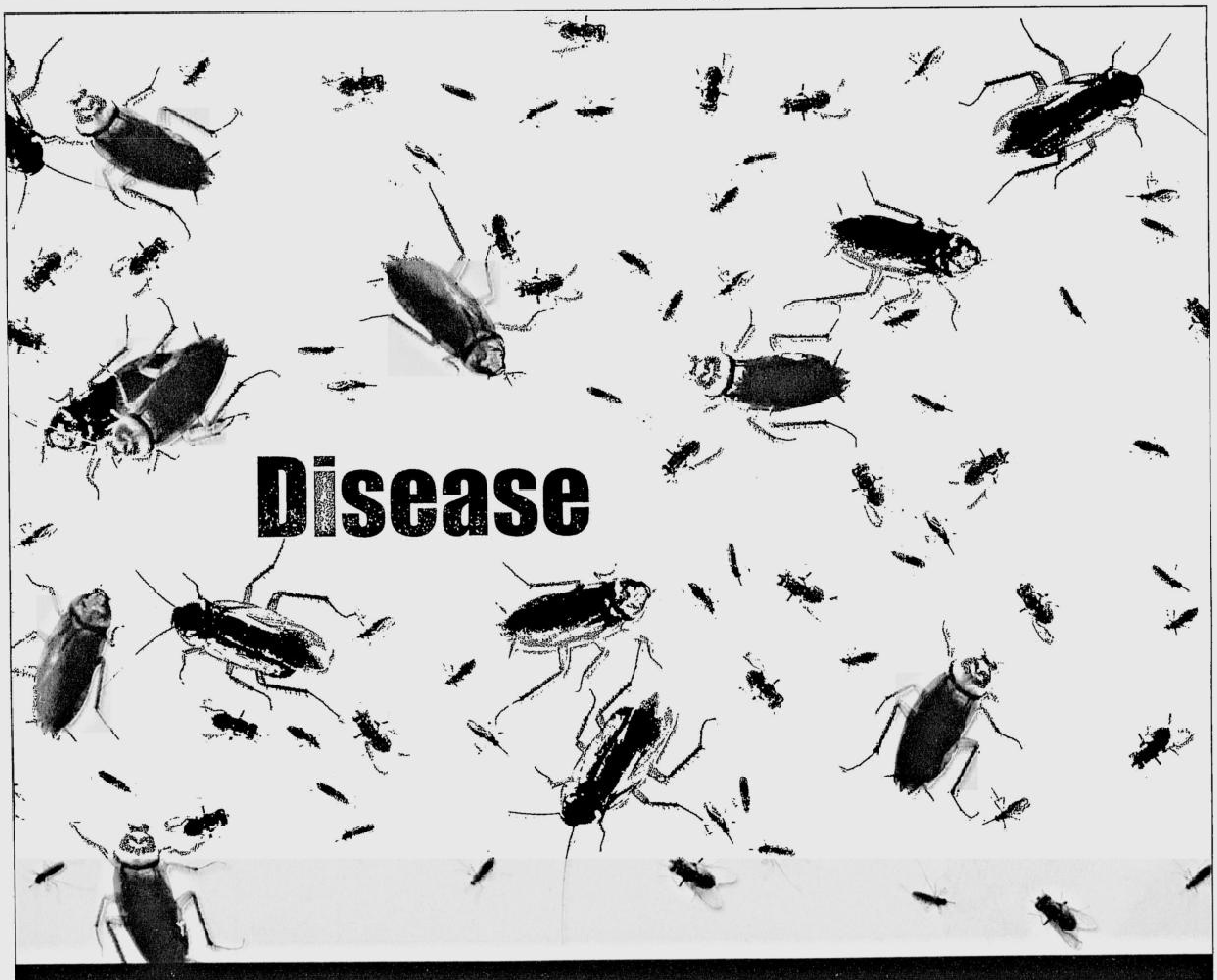
As the title and figures indicate, Tayona's resemble Botero's only in the matter of weight-watching. They do not take after Botero's special quality of parodying canoni-



"EMBRACE," by Tayona



"MYSTIC Quiver," by Tayo



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nd the art of wit

cal works of art or caricaturing figures of authority.

Since Tayona has also done children's illustrations, his sensibility is more innocent. His art is really along naïf lines (he resembles in this case Jack Salud), his colors and lines assuming a distinct dreamlike quality all his, as in "Drapery and Dreams" and the romantic "Baile."

Come to think of it, the exhibit by Samonte and Tayona is not so much about humor but about fantasy, which humor and imaginativeness presuppose. Fantasy is the lodestone of art, actually.

"Art, Actually," organized by The Artery, opens tomorrow at 7 p.m. at Gallery Nine (SM Megamall). Call 6877302.

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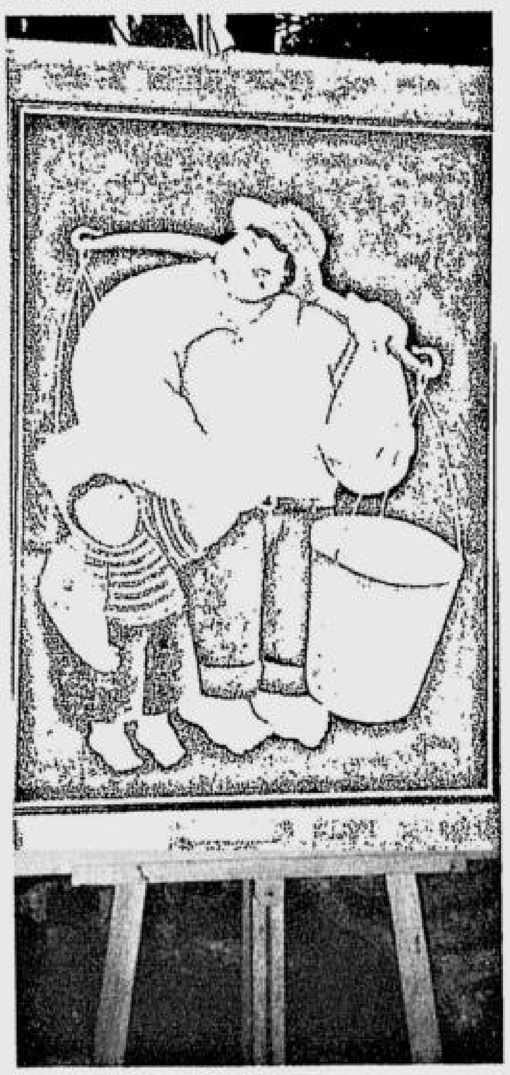
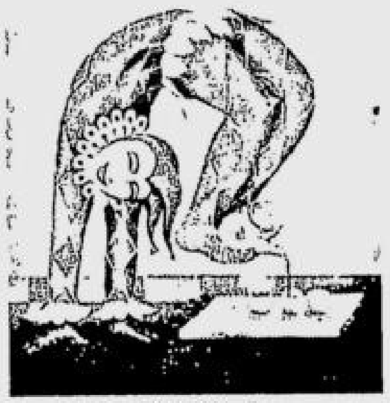
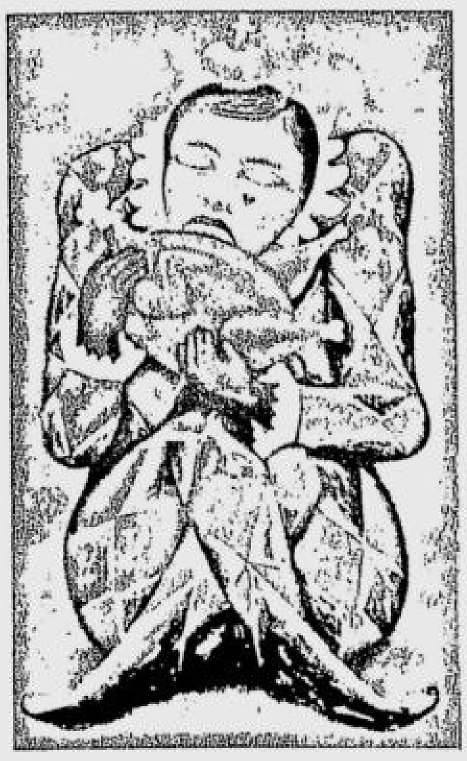


"SOYA and Son," by Tayona

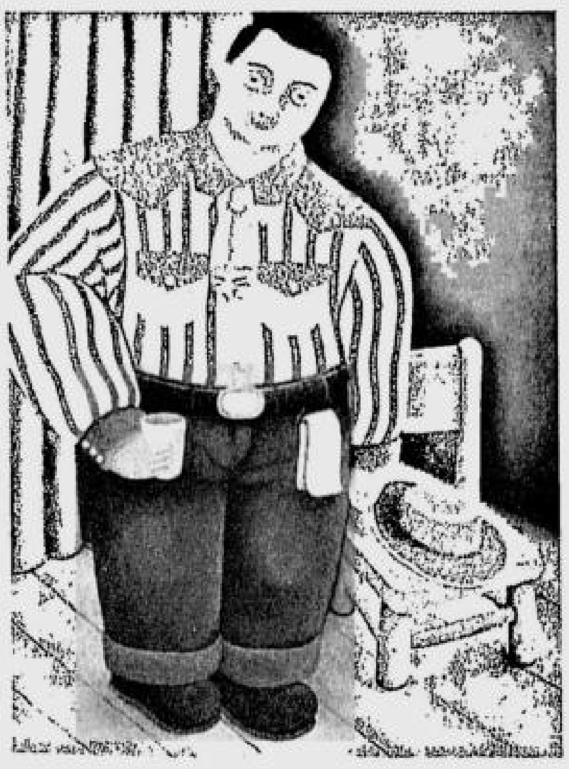
"FIGURATIVE Speech," by Samonte



"DEXTERI-TEA," by Samonte



CHICKEN a la King," by Samonte



"SQUARE Dancer," by Tayona

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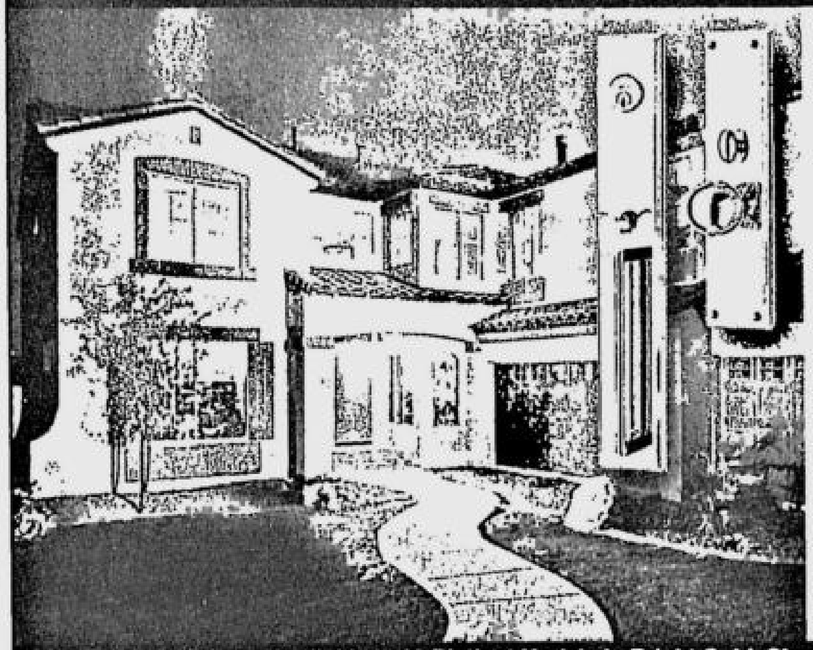

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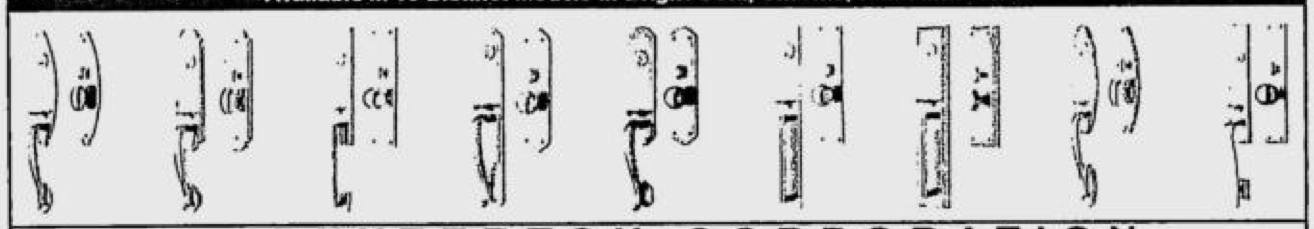

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A jazzy Francophone evening

CANADIAN Embassy's Christopher Daniel and Robert Carver, Lise Villeneuve's manager

CANADIAN jazz singer-pianist Lise Villaneuve with Canadian Ambassador Peter Sutherland and wife Jo Lynne, and Swiss Ambassador Lise Favre at The Podium

AUSTRIAN Ambassador Christian Krepela

IT WAS an evening of French lyrics, jazz rhythms and great camaraderie at The Podium recently when French-Canadian jazz artist Lise Villeneuve performed.

A joint project of the Canadian Embassy and The Podium in cooperation with Smart Communications, "Lise Villeneuve in Concert" was one of the highlights of the Le Journée Internationale de la Francophonie (International Day of the Francophonie), an annual celebration of countries that share French as a common language.

Canadian Ambassador Peter Sutherland and wife Jo-Lynne graced the occasion, as did dignitaries from the diplomatic corps. These included French Ambassador Renée Veyret, Swiss Ambassador Lise Favre, Austrian Ambassador Christian Krepela and the wife of the New Zealand Ambassador, Jen Baker.

Also seen enjoying the event were Canadian Chamber of Commerce governor Richard Tremblay, the French Embassy for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs' counselor Franck Hebert, Consul Monique Pacetti and Press Attaché Benedicte Meyssan; and Alliance Française director Philippe Normand.

Martin Biens, the Embassy of Switzerland's deputy head of mission, Franklin Silva of the Embassy of Portugal, Juan Jose Goldnick of Embassy of Venezuela and Elizabeth Raymundo and Carlo Figueroa of the Australian Embassy were also present.

Asian Development Bank executives Claire Lewis, Jean Duquet, and Jak and Vicky Jabes also took time to jazz up.

The Canadian Embassy's Christopher Daniel and David da Silva, together with The Podium's partner from Keppel Philippines SVP Sin Wai Meng, were on hand to welcome guests.

Lise, charmed the audience with her talent, warmth and rich repertoire of original compositions, mostly in French. Her music gave the audience a glimpse of her persona and experiences.

"Le Vieux Port" (The Old Port), for example, is about an encounter in Montreal; while "Chere Maman" (Dear Mother) is about chasing the musical dream.

She also sang about perseverance ("Un Mardi" or "On a Tuesday"); distance and family ("Loin de Vous" or "Far from Home"); long-distance love ("Toi et Moi" or "You and Me on Friendship"); the inspirations of love and liberty ("L'Hirondelle" or "The Sparrow"); and a farewell song to the audience ("I See It on Your Faces").

Lise, who is from Alberta, was last year's first-prize winner at the prestigious Tremplin International de la Chanson Francophonie in Paris, where she represented Canada.

La Francophonie festivities were celebrated in Manila in collaboration with Alliance Française de Manille and members of the Francophonie which have representations in the Philippines. These include Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Egypt, France, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Laos, Lebanon, Lithuania, Monaco, Morocco, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Seychelles, Slovenia, Switzerland, Togo, Vanuata and Vietnam.

FRENCH Ambassador Renée Veyret (second from left) with Keppel Philippines country manager Sin Wai Meng, Alliance Française director Philippe Normand and Consul Monique Pacetti of the French Embassy

EMBASSY of Portugal's chancellor Franklin Silva and wife Palmira

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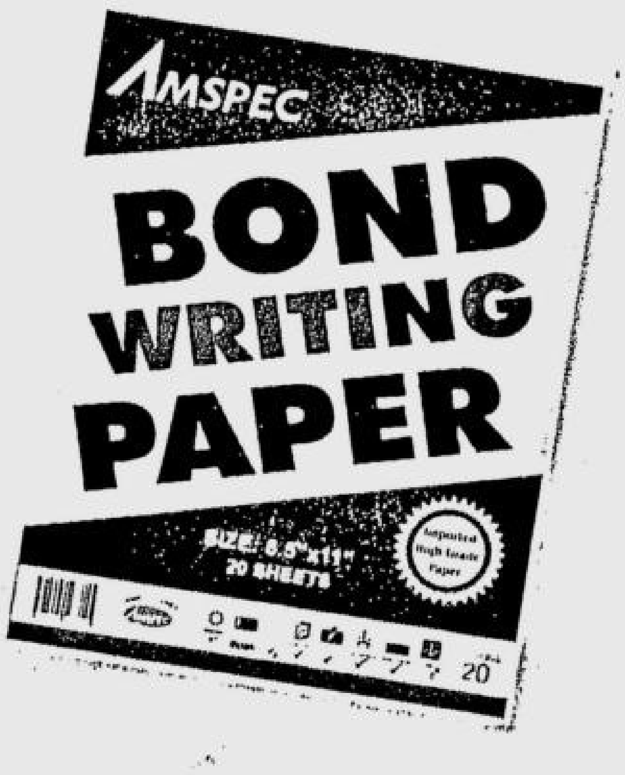
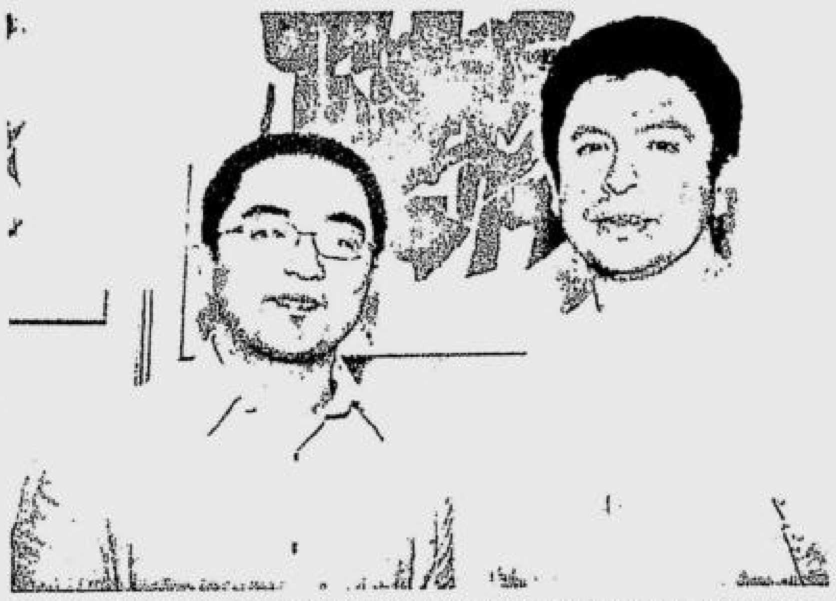


PRINTMAKERS Raul Piedra, Raul Isidro and Mario Parial viewing Japanese prints

Japanese prints take the spotlight



JFMO assistant director Hiroaki Uesugi and Venezuelan charge d'affaires Juan Goldnick

SHANGRI-LA Plaza and the Japan Foundation Manila Office (JFMO) presented the exhibit "Japanese Prints: 1950-1990," which featured 75 prints (by 46 artists) from the Japan Foundation collection.

JFMO assistant director Hiroaki Uesugi and Shangri-La Plaza general manager Lala Fojas joined the other guests of honor in formally opening the exhibit, which drew local artists of various media, and, of course, our very own printmakers, headed by Philippine Association of Printmakers president Raul Isidro and vice president Raul Piedra.

In the opening were printmakers Mario Parial and Benjie Torrado Cabrera, visual artists Roland Rosacay and Salvador Ching, art photographer Toto Tarrosa, artists Nonon Padilla, Jess Flores, Gerry Navilon of the Pintor Waraynon group, Saturday Group president Buds Convocar and Manuel Baldemor, and sculptors Joe Datuin, Paul Quiano and Reggie Yuson.

Also present were JFMO's Madeleine Nicolas and Ken Esguerra, Venezuelan charge d'affaires Juan Goldnick, Japan Embassy's Kana Ochiai with Mr. Uesugi's winsome wife Naomi, and Shangri-La Plaza's Michael Dugenia and Ramed Borja.

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Chamber music that is ardently appreciated

'Diva's Night Out' was a ravishing night of music

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

SOPRANO Rachelle Gerodias

LARGELY through the efforts of flutist David J. Johnson and pianist Hyun Joo Lee, chamber music has gotten a boost. Two years ago, this pair of highly motivated musicians organized the Clarion Chamber Ensemble (CCE), which held successful season concerts featuring both local and foreign musicians. Their mission was to bring "first-class chamber music" to the country and continue the tradition of forging a close partnership between the performing musical artists and the audience in celebration of musical harmony.

At Phil-Am Life Theater, recently, the CCE's final offering, "Diva's Night Out," received ardent appreciation from the audience. It featured soprano Rachelle Gerodias with a supporting cast of "other divas and divos." Professor Russel Brandon emceed the program and made random notes about the pieces.

The featured soprano impressed the audience with her vocal prowess as she tackled songs of contrasting stylistic idioms. She was utterly majestic in Bach's "Jauchzet Gott in Allen Landen" (Cantata No. 51). Here, she disclosed a full-throated rendition of her instrument, etching the difficult demands of the melodic lines that surged to the upper register.

Fine company

Visibly, Gerodias and the collaborating ensemble greatly enjoyed the pleasure of fine music-making. The interruptions made by the audience applauding in between sections did not deter them from performing remarkably well.

Sounding quite prominently, the trumpet would have been more pleasing to to the ear had it tempered its sound, which could have been achieved through a tonal rearrangement.

The ensemble was composed of Liza Lopez and Dino Decena, violin; Arnold Josue and Renato Lucas, cello; Rommel Cruz, bass; Popee Parin, trumpet; and Najib Ismail, continuo.

From the majesty of Bach's sacred music, Rachelle shifted to the comical. Now singing sans score, she was in excellent control of her vocal instrument, essaying Debussy's "Quatre Cjansons de Jeunesse" with such aplomb! She underscored Debussy's wit with appropriate gestures. She struck a confident stance and communicated well with her audience.

Listening all the more became engaging with the excellent playing of Ismail at the piano whose collaborative rapport with the singer was of the highest order.

Rachelle was utterly ravishing in Schubert's "Shepherd on the Rock" with Ariel Sta. Ana on the clarinet and Ismael on the piano. She rendered the song with much caress, etching its pastoral lyricism with intense warmth. This piece has become the soprano's signature piece; one has yet to hear another soprano sing it with

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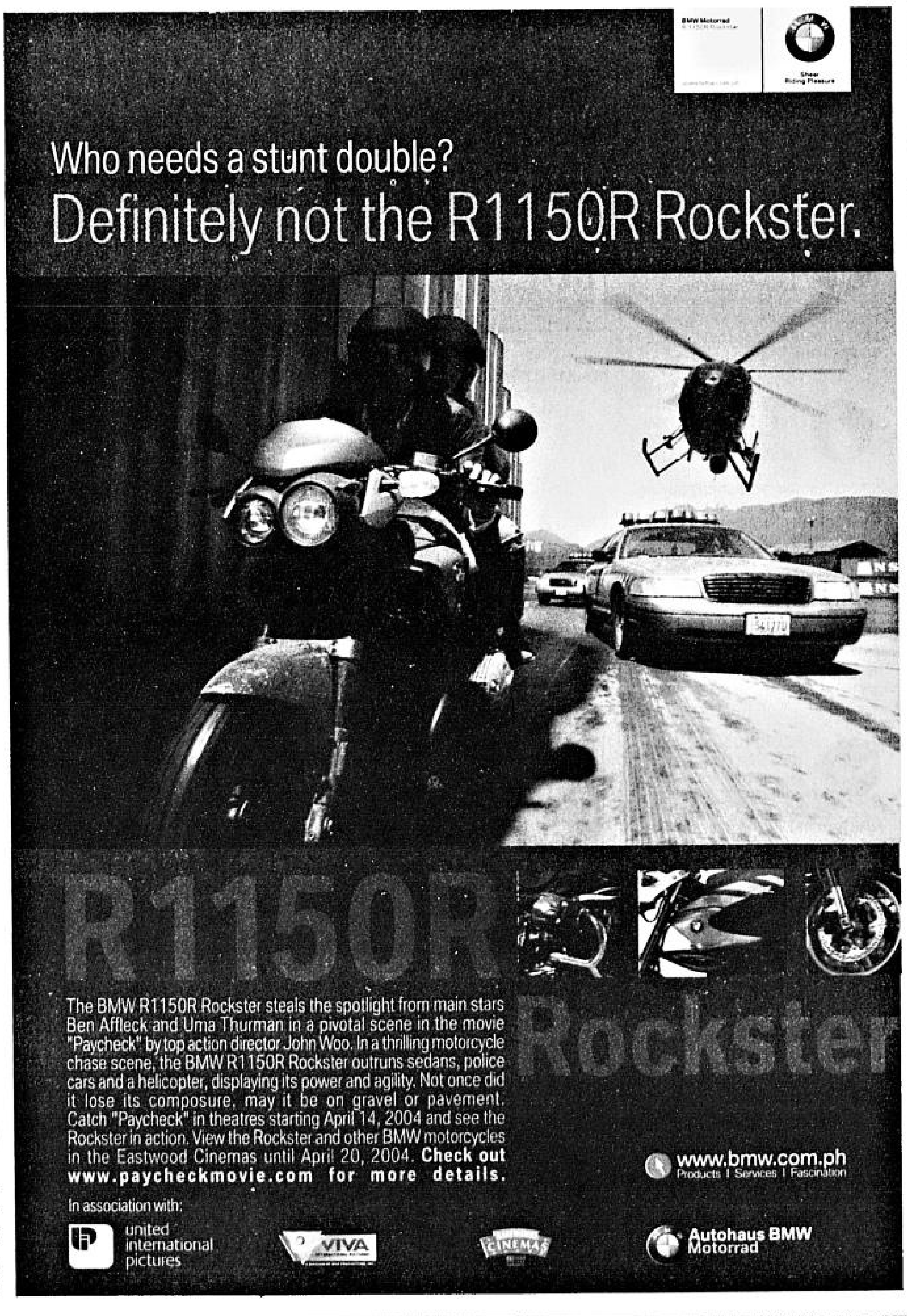

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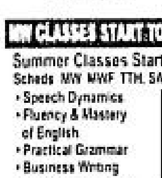
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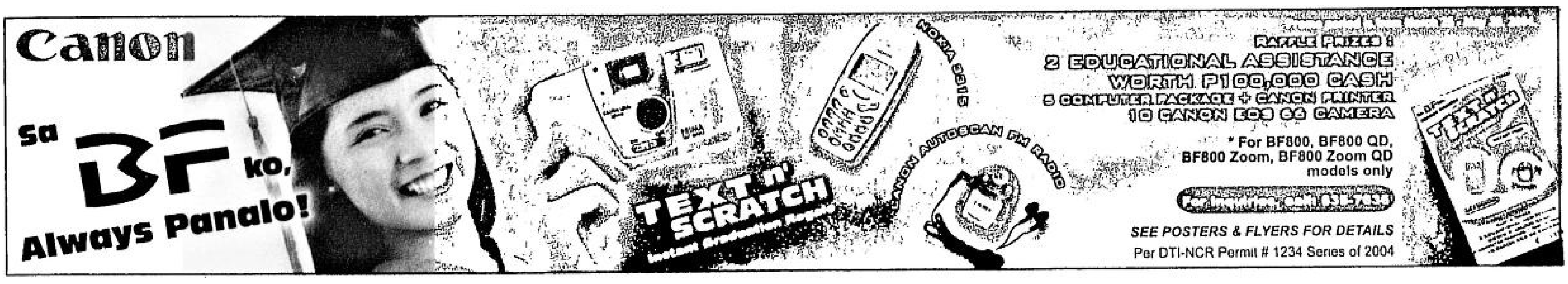

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Chamber music that is ardently appreciated

'Diva's Night Out' was a ravishing night of music

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

LARGELY through the efforts of flutist David J. Johnson and pianist Hyun Joo Lee, chamber music has gotten a boost. Two years ago, this pair of highly motivated musicians organized the Clarion Chamber Ensemble (CCE), which held successful season concerts featuring both local and foreign musicians. Their mission was to bring "first-class chamber music" to the country and continue the tradition of forging a close partnership between the performing musical artists and the audience in celebration of musical harmony.

At Phil-Am Life Theater, recently, the CCE's final offering, "Diva's Night Out," received ardent appreciation from the audience. It featured soprano Rachelle Gerodias with a supporting cast of "other divas and divos." Professor Russel Brandon emceed the program and made random notes about the pieces.

The featured soprano impressed the audience with her vocal prowess as she tackled songs of contrasting stylistic idioms. She was utterly majestic in Bach's "Jauchzet Gott in Allen Landen" (Cantata No. 51). Here, she disclosed a full-throated rendition of her instrument, etching the difficult demands of the melodic lines that surged to the upper register.

Fine company

Visibly, Gerodias and the collaborating ensemble greatly enjoyed the pleasure of fine music-making. The interruptions made by the audience applauding in between sections did not deter them from performing remarkably well.

Sounding quite prominently, the trumpet would have been more pleasing to to the ear had it tempered its sound, which could have been achieved through a tonal rearrangement.

The ensemble was composed of Liza Lopez and Dino Decena, violin; Arnold Josue and Renato Lucas, cello; Rommel Cruz, bass, Popee Parin, trumpet; and Najib Ismail, continuo.

From the majesty of Bach's sacred music, Rachelle shifted to the comical. Now singing sans score, she was in excellent control of her vocal instrument, essaying Debussy's "Quatre Cjansons de Jeunesse" with such aplomb! She underscored Debussy's wit with appropriate gestures. She struck a confident stance and communicated well with her audience.

Listening all the more became engaging with the excellent playing of Ismail at the piano whose collaborative rapport with the singer was of the highest order.

Rachelle was utterly ravishing in Schubert's "Shepherd on the Rock" with Ariel Sta. Ana on the clarinet and Ismael on the piano. She rendered the song with much caress, etching its pastoral lyricism with intense warmth. This piece has become the soprano's signature piece; one has yet to hear another soprano sing it with

CHAMBER E3

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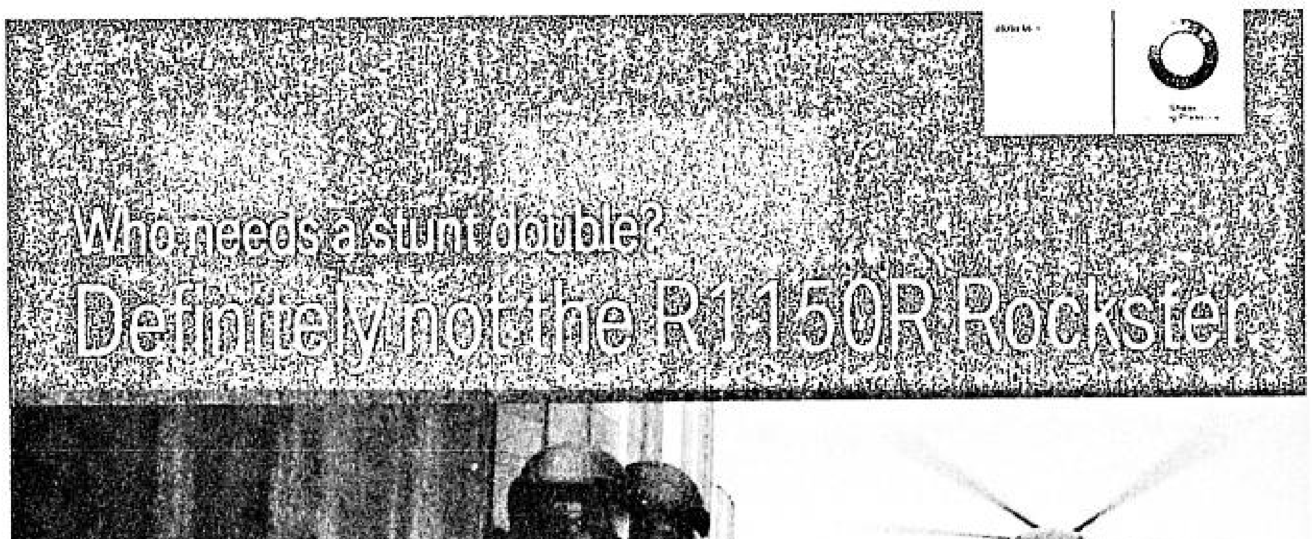
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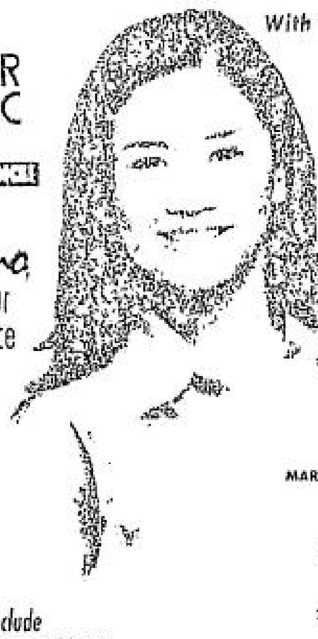
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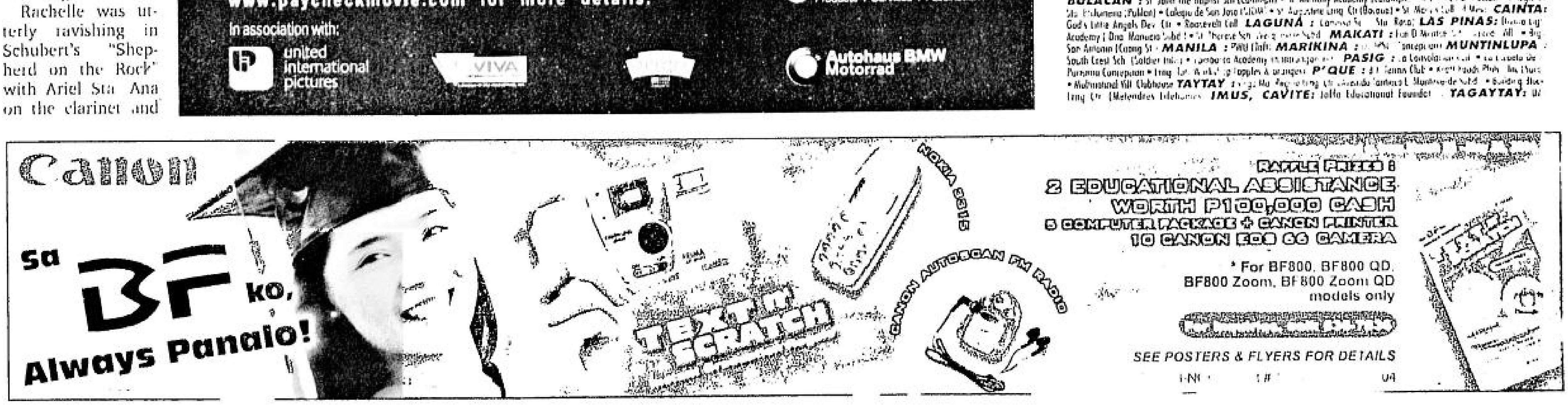
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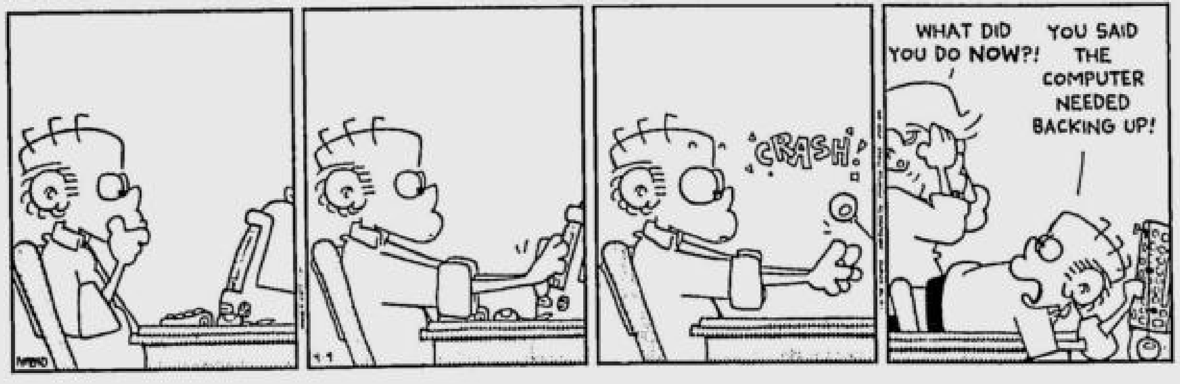
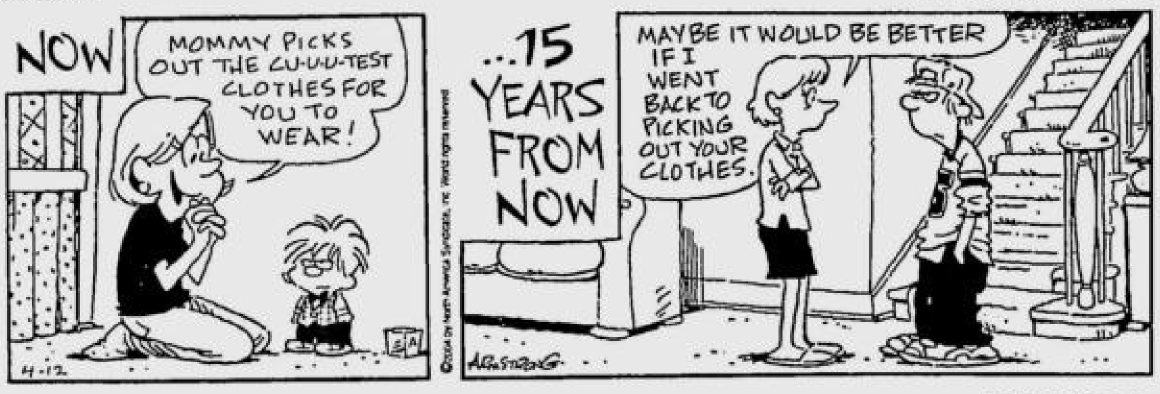
BY BILL AMEND


CRASH!
WHAT DID YOU DO NOW?!
YOU SAID THE COMPUTER NEEDED BACKING UP!

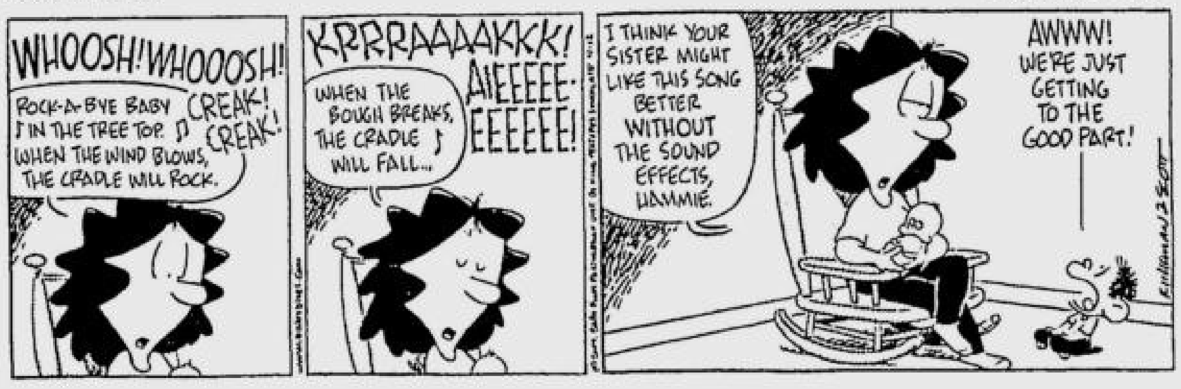
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


NOW
MOMMY PICKS OUT THE CU-U-U-TEST CLOTHES FOR YOU TO WEAR!
...15 YEARS FROM NOW
MAYBE IT WOULD BE BETTER IF I WENT BACK TO PICKING OUT YOUR CLOTHES.

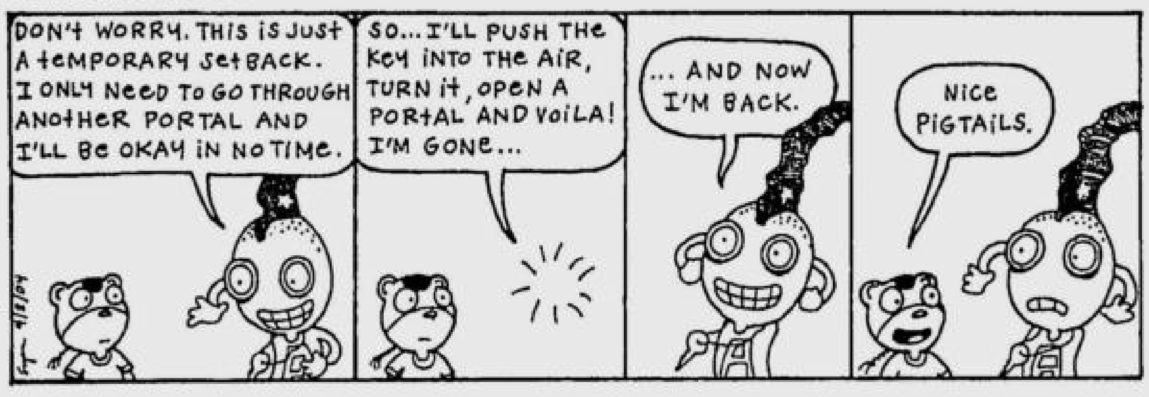
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHOOSH! WHOOOSH!
ROCK-A-BYE BABY IN THE TREE TOP. WHEN THE WIND BLOWS, THE CRADLE WILL ROCK.
CREAK! CREAK!
KRRRAAAAKKK!
WHEN THE BOUGH BREAKS, THE CRADLE WILL FALL...
AIEEEEE-EEEEEE!
I THINK YOUR SISTER MIGHT LIKE THIS SONG BETTER WITHOUT THE SOUND EFFECTS, HAMMIE.
AWWW! WE'RE JUST GETTING TO THE GOOD PART!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


DON'T WORRY. THIS IS JUST A TEMPORARY SETBACK. I ONLY NEED TO GO THROUGH ANOTHER PORTAL AND I'LL BE OKAY IN NO TIME.
SO... I'LL PUSH THE KEY INTO THE AIR, TURN IT, OPEN A PORTAL AND VOILA! I'M GONE...
... AND NOW I'M BACK.
NICE PIGTAILS.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You often begin your career in one direction then switch to something else. You definitely have your finger on the pulse of the public. In part, this is because you are incessantly curious about all facets of life. You're active in groups. Apply yourself diligently in the year ahead, because your reward will come! **Birthdate of:** Andy Garcia, actor; Claire Danes, actress; Scott Turow, author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Lately it feels like it's two steps forward and one step backward. It's hard to make progress. Old business demands your attention. (That's just the way it is.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): It's wise to think about how to clear up old matters connected with the government or large institutions. They're not going to go away just because you're ignoring them.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be receptive to a friend from your past. You never know where this might lead. Shake yourself out of your velvet rut and be open to new situations.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Quite possibly, an old job opportunity could surface again now. If you are looking for work, try places where you worked once before. That's your best bet this month.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Old publishing contacts or people you knew from school might cross your path now. This could lead to some interesting opportunities for you. Keep an open mind!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): If you have to clean up details regarding insurance matters, wills, inheritances, estates or anything having to do with shared possessions, you couldn't pick a better time. It will go easily now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It's not easy dealing with ex-partners and spouses. Try to take the high road. Be the change you want to see in others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Delayed mail, confused communication, machinery breakdowns and staff shortages are challenging at work. The easiest way to handle these things is to not let them get you down. One day at a time.

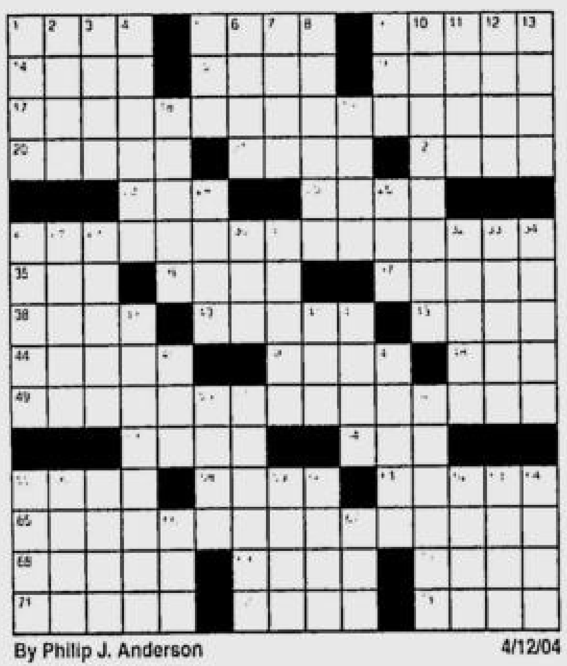
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a good time to settle disputes about the responsibilities of children. Keep in mind that the welfare of the children is what comes first.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You can make sweeping changes at home today! Clean up messy situations. Fix whatever needs to be repaired. This same approach can be applied to family relationships as well.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your ability to sell, convince, persuade or teach is phenomenal today! You're like the Pied Piper. Everyone you talk to will simply fall in step right behind you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might come up with an entirely new approach to earning money today. You see new solutions to old problems. You also see how to use your resources in a different way.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

4/12/04

ACROSS
1 Sets
5 Brown shades
9 Run on the pitcher
14 Touched down
15 Elliptical track
16 __ firma
17 Wells novel
20 Scorch
21 Arp's art
22 "Peter Pan" pooch
23 Grad. degrees
25 "Born Free" lioness
27 Magic feat
35 Summer hours in St. Pete
36 Fifth Avenue store
37 Madagascar primate
38 MGM symbol
40 French subway
43 Yokel
44 Greek poet
46 OK Corral combatant
48 __ Jose, CA
49 Childhood companion?
53 Turkish titles
54 Marshland
55 Send out
58 Hot tubs
61 Tumbler
65 Where parallel lines meet?
68 Aluminum co.
69 Memorizing process
70 Russian refusal
71 Point of view
72 Bridge seat
73 Diner food

DOWN
1 Hoods' heaters
2 Of grades 1 to 12 in sch.
3 Income claim
4 Mark of disgrace
5 Mazel __!
6 Eager
7 Shuttle grp.
8 Trick pitch
9 Letters on Cardinals' caps
10 Adolescent
11 Ms. Bombeck
12 Irish islands
13 Actress Turner
18 Certain tides
19 Indonesian island
24 Junk e-mail
26 L. Michaels' show
27 Indian city
28 Regional speech
29 Plant pore
30 Just get by
31 Fall bloomer
32 Make laugh
33 Type of cigar or sandwich
34 General tendency
39 Denial
41 Sunbeam
42 Composer of "Carmina Burana"
45 Manipulate dishonestly
47 You're welcome in Bologna
50 "Bed Riddance" author
51 Strive toward an end
52 Like Rollerblades
55 Gabor and Peron
56 Shopping spot
57 Machu Picchu honcho
59 Celebes animal
60 Some NCOs
62 Writer Seton
63 Editor's note
64 Mach breakers
66 Formed a lap
67 Stroke lightly

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

M	E	S	S	■	T	R	I	G	■	M	A	G	M	A
A	C	H	E	■	O	O	N	A	■	O	I	L	E	R
C	H	A	T	■	M	A	R	R	■	T	R	U	S	T
H	O	G	A	N	B	R	I	D	G	E	■	M	A	Y
■	■	■	■	A	S	E	■	E	R	L	E	■	■	■
S	C	R	A	M	■	R	E	N	E	■	A	C	T	E
C	R	I	M	E	S	■	R	I	A	■	T	A	R	E
A	U	G	U	S	T	A	N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L
R	E	E	L	■	O	N	S	■	S	L	U	I	C	E
E	L	L	E	■	K	I	T	H	■	O	T	T	E	R
■	■	■	T	E	E	S	■	I	O	N	■	■	■	■
S	O	I	■	G	R	E	E	N	J	A	C	K	E	T
C	H	E	E	R	■	T	A	T	A	■	Z	E	R	O
A	I	S	L	E	■	T	R	E	Y	■	A	N	O	N
B	O	O	S	T	■	E	N	D	S	■	R	O	S	S

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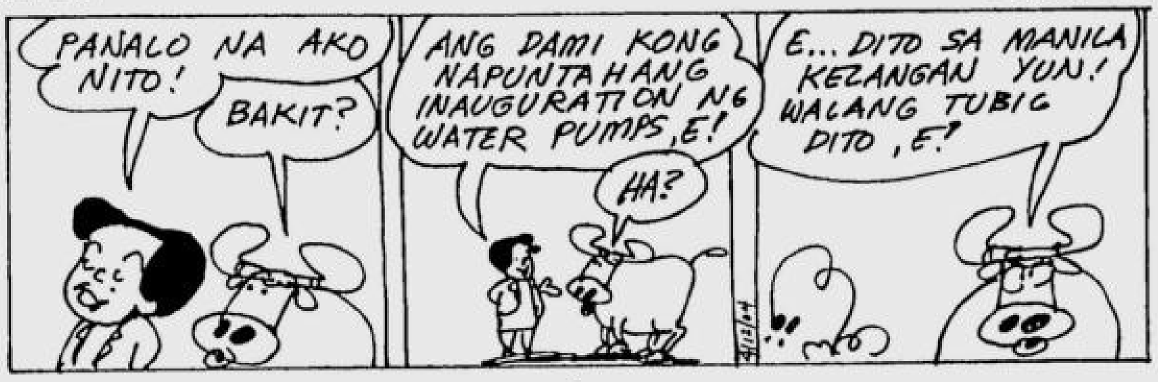
4/9/04

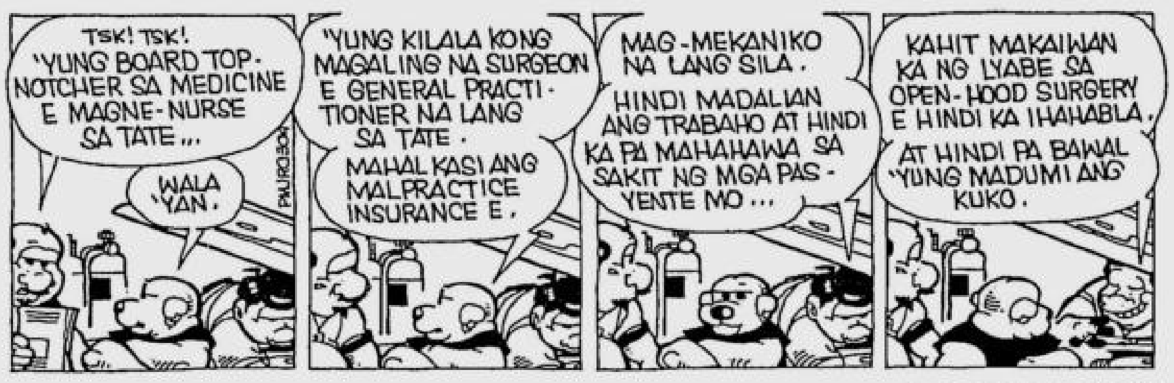
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PANALO NA AKO NITO!
BAKIT?
ANG DAMI KONG NAPUNTAHANG INAUGURATION NG WATER PUMPS, E!
HA?
E... DITO SA MANILA KEZANGAN YUN! WALANG TUBIG DITO, E!

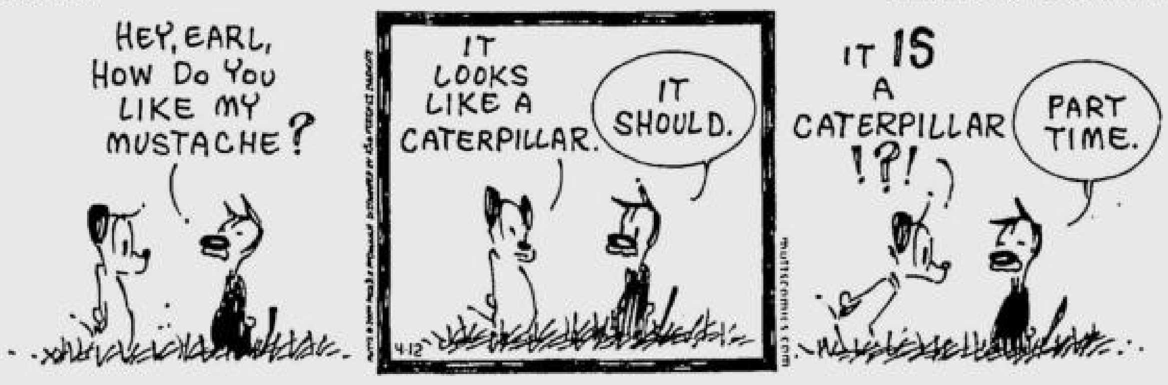
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TSK! TSK! 'YUNG BOARD TOP-NOTCHER SA MEDICINE E MAGNE-NURSE SA TATE...
WALA 'YAN.
'YUNG KILALA KONG MAGALING NA SURGEON E GENERAL PRACTITIONER NA LANG SA TATE.
MAHAL KASI ANG MALPRACTICE INSURANCE E.
MAG-MEKANIKO NA LANG SILA.
HINDI MADALIAN ANG TRABAHO AT HINDI KA PA MAHAHAWA SA SAKIT NG MGA PASYENTE MO...
KAHIT MAKAIWAN KA NG LYABE SA OPEN-HOOD SURGERY E HINDI KA IHAHABLA.
AT HINDI PA BAWAL 'YUNG MADUMI ANG KUKO.

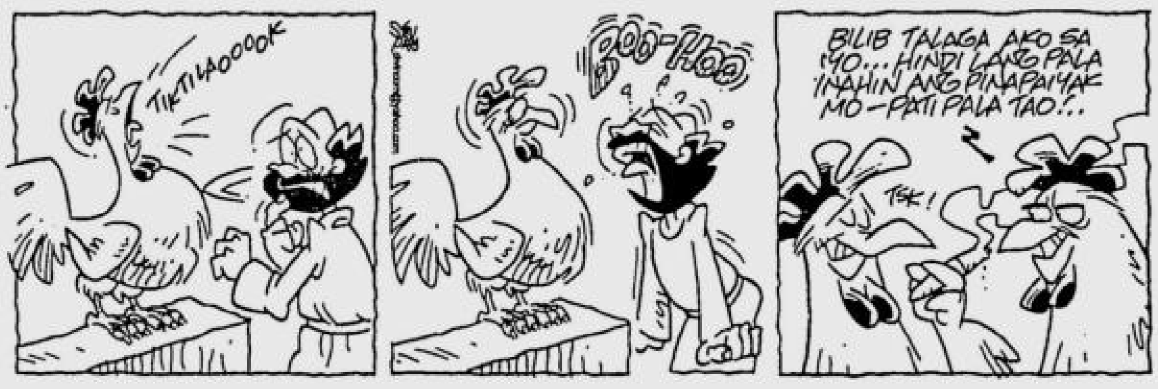
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, EARL, HOW DO YOU LIKE MY MUSTACHE?
IT LOOKS LIKE A CATERPILLAR.
IT SHOULD.
IT IS A CATERPILLAR !?!
PART TIME.

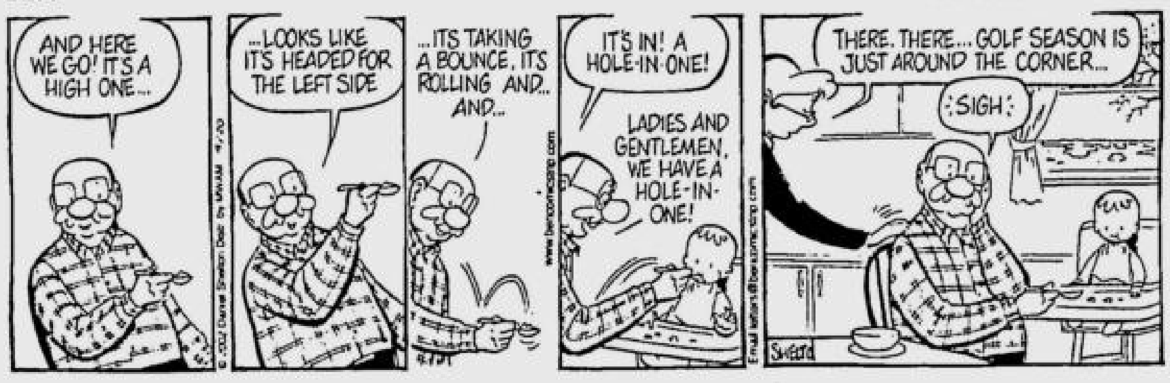
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TIKTILAOOOOK
BOO-HOO
BILIB TALAGA AKO SA IYO... HINDI LANG PALA INAHIN ANG PINAPAIYAK MO—PATI PALA TAO!..
TSK!

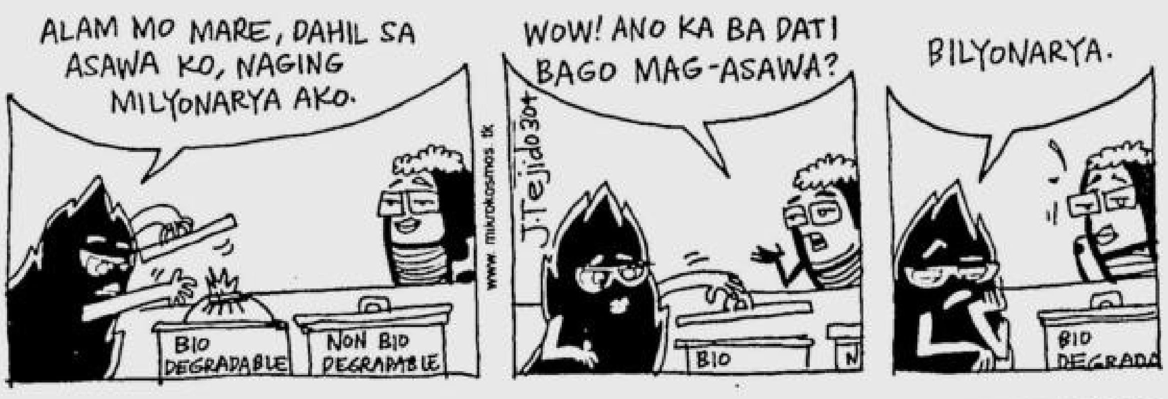
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


AND HERE WE GO! IT'S A HIGH ONE...
...LOOKS LIKE IT'S HEADED FOR THE LEFT SIDE
...ITS TAKING A BOUNCE, ITS ROLLING AND... AND...
IT'S IN! A HOLE-IN-ONE!
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE A HOLE-IN-ONE!
THERE. THERE... GOLF SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER...
SIGH

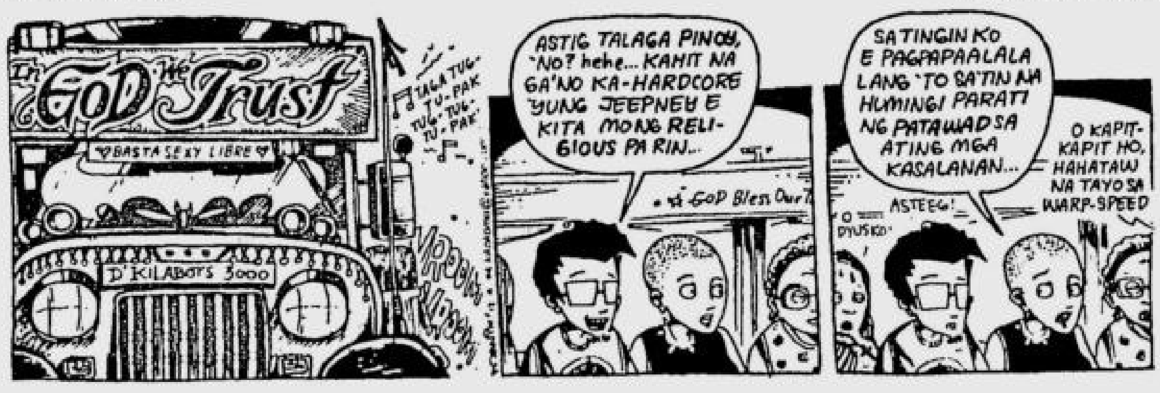
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ALAM MO MARE, DAHIL SA ASAWA KO, NAGING MILYONARYA AKO.
BIO DEGRADABLE
NON BIO DEGRADABLE
WOW! ANO KA BA DATI BAGO MAG-ASAWA?
BILYONARYA.

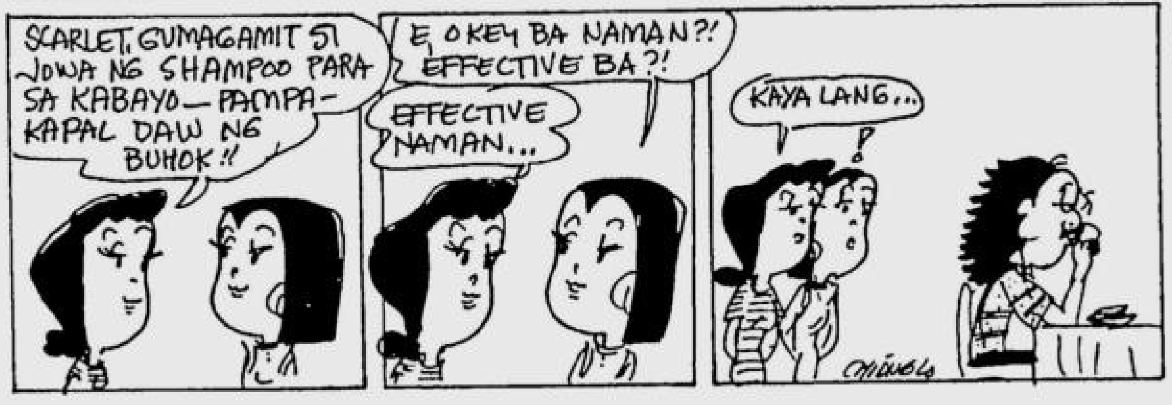
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


In GOD We Trust
BASTA SEXY LIBRE
D' KILABOTS 3000
TUGA TUG-TU-PAK TUG-TUG-TU-PAK
ASTIG TALAGA PINOY, 'NO? hehe... KAHIT NA GA'NO KA-HARDCORE 'YUNG JEEPNEY E KITA MONG RELIGIOUS PA RIN..
GOD Bless Our T
SA TINGIN KO E PAGPAPAALALA LANG 'TO SA'TIN NA HUMINGI PARATI NG PATAWAD SA ATING MGA KASALANAN...
O DYUSKO!
ASTEEG!
O KAPIT-KAPIT HO. HAHATAW NA TAYO SA WARP-SPEED

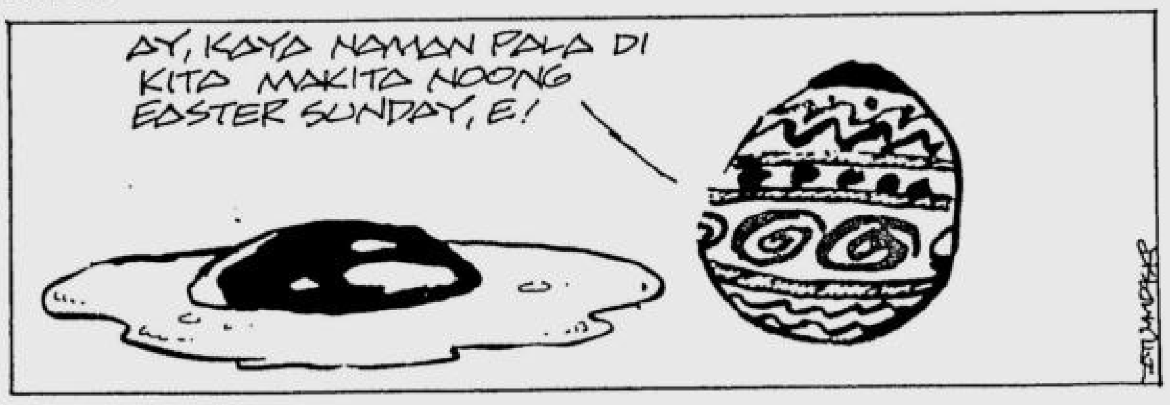
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SCARLET, GUMAGAMIT SI JOWA NG SHAMPOO PARA SA KABAYO—PAMPAKAPAL DAW NG BUHOK!!
E, OKEY BA NAMAN?! EFFECTIVE BA?!
EFFECTIVE NAMAN...
KAYA LANG...

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


AY, KAYA NAMAN PALA DI KITA MAKITA NOONG EASTER SUNDAY, E!

Israeli ensemble to visit RP

THE ISRAELI musical group Seeds of the Sun will be visiting the Philippines from April 19-23. It is a contemporary ensemble that plays a fusion of Eastern music with Western influences, producing a fresh, innovative spin on jazz favorites and at the same time introducing Israeli music.

Seeds of the Sun has delighted audiences across the United States and Canada. Its music has been described as musically playful and audience-engaging.

The ensemble members are flutist Matten Klein, pianist Yoav Polachek and vocalist Michal Cohen. All three play with other bands as well, and share their experiences with a wide range of musical peers, from Yemenite ensembles to the New York jazz scene.

Mattan Klein was born and raised in Jerusalem and later moved to the United States where he graduated from the Berklee College of Music in Boston. He has performed with Berklee faculty members and guest artists such as Billy Childs, Giovanni Hidalgo and Victor Mendoza. He has toured across America, Europe and Brazil, and was a winner of the John Lennon Song Writing Contest under Jazz Composition in 2000.

Yoav Polachek is a native of Tel Aviv and an alumnus of the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he met Mattan Klein. He has a Masters degree from NYU and is now an active jazz pianist in New York and an Internet audio specialist for andante.com.

Michal Cohen is also a graduate of the Berklee College of Music, and has performed on numerous stages across the United States. She has received the Cleo Laine vocal jazz award and was a finalist at the John Lennon Song Writing Contest in 2002.

The group will be performing in Makati City and Cebu City in celebration of the 56th Independence Day of the State of Israel. The event is organized by the Embassy of Israel together with the Arts Council of Cebu and Philippine Airlines.

Call 8940441 or visit http://manila.mfa.gov.il.

SEEDS of the Sun has delighted audiences abroad.

Chamber music. . .

From page E1

equal beauty.

Restrained

She sung the San Pedro pieces, "Diwata ng Pagibig" and "Sa Mahal Kong Bayan" with appropriate emotional approach: restrained rather than uninhibited, and intensely lyrical.

However, her vocal timbre did not match the almost dramatic demand of the pieces. If he were watching, Maestro San Pedro would have sulked on his seat hearing the markings of the third and fourth sections interpreted interchangeably, making the "moderato assai" slower and the "maestoso" faster.

Nonetheless, the ensemble playing was good. Mary Grace and Isidora Miranda played first and second violins, respectively; Michi Martinez, viola; Arnold Josue, cello; and Ismail, piano.

Vicent D'Indy's "Suite in Olden Style," and Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 45 in G Major," were the instrumental renditions. The latter piece that ended the program was excellently performed.

Fine ensemble playing marked the rendition. Vitality and elegance fused to characterize the "dialogue" between the small group of instruments (concertino) and the entire ensemble (ripieno). Notable was the elegant sound that flutists Johnson and Santiago Yangco forged in exchanging repartee with the cello and the continuo. Exquisitely fine was Lopez's violin solo, and the entire ensemble sounded so magnificent together.

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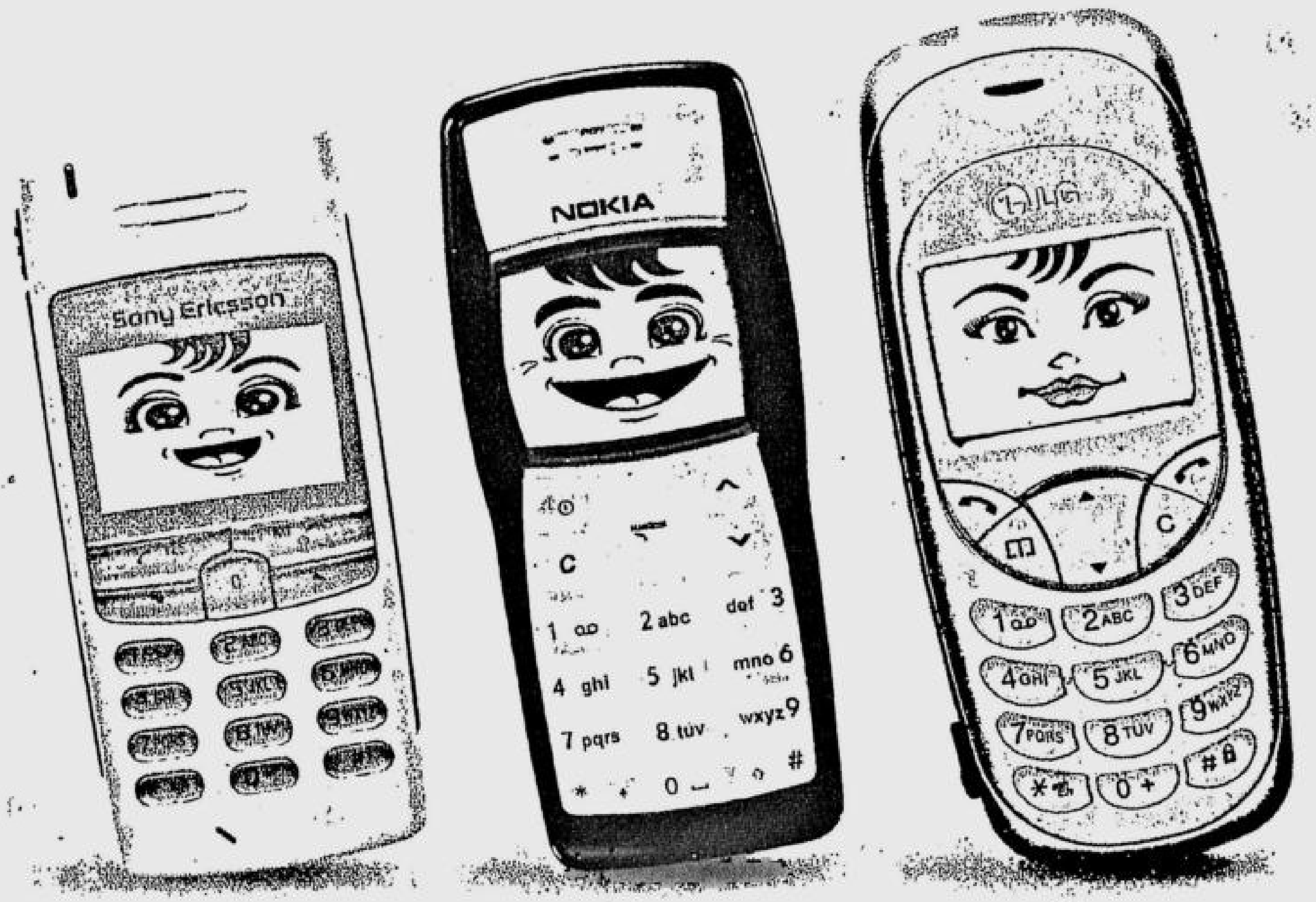

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How about going downtown once again?

The challenge to city denizens is to revitalize their cities

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

TO FIND ways to get people back into our decaying city centers once again, Urban Partnerships Foundation is sponsoring the seminar "Reactivating Downtowns: Challenges, Opportunities, Tolls and Techniques," on April 14.

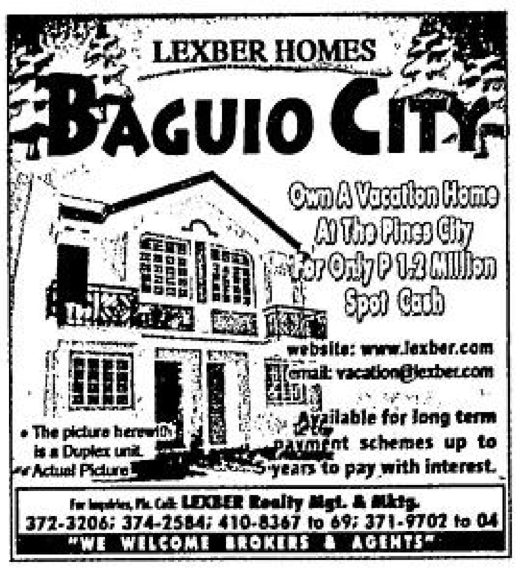
The one-day seminar focuses on the degradation of city centers all over the Philippines and attempts to find directions and solutions to revive them.

Remember the time when all roads led downtown? "Downtown" was each city's nerve center, its commercial hub where the full range of retail, service and entertainment were located.

Demographic changes and new retail shopping preferences killed the growth of city centers. When people shifted to malls, the traditional city center slipped into a gradual decline until it lost its vibrance.

It eventually degenerated into a congested and traffic-snarled area, losing most of its

HOW/ F4



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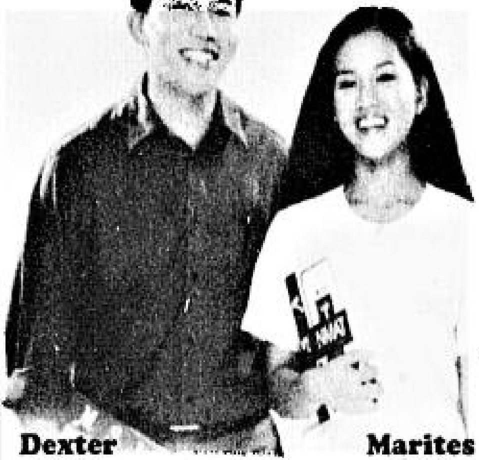

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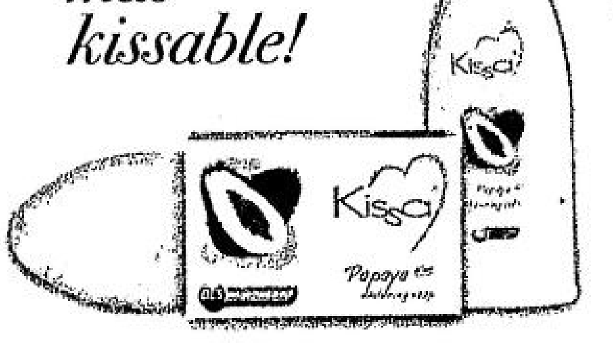

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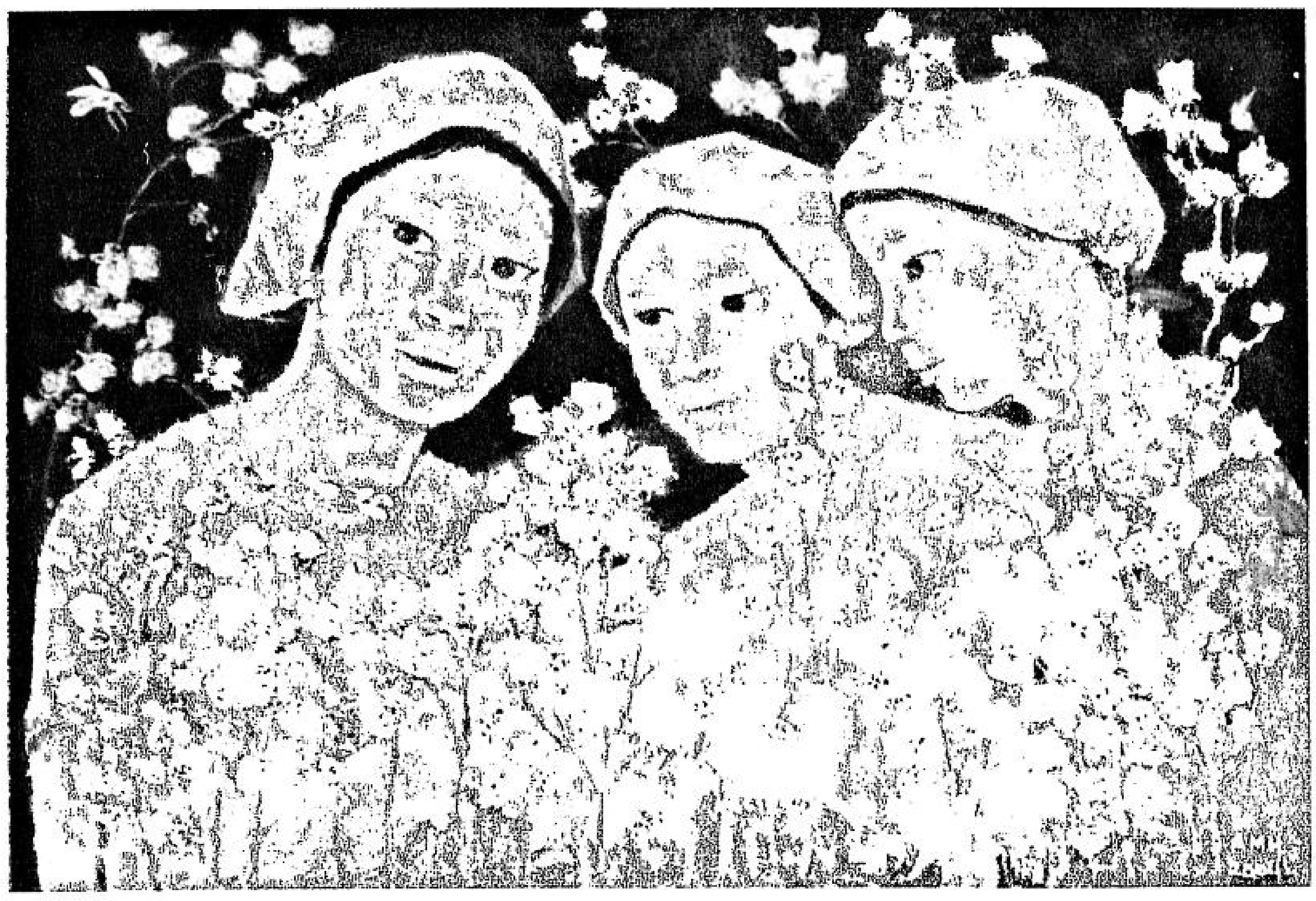
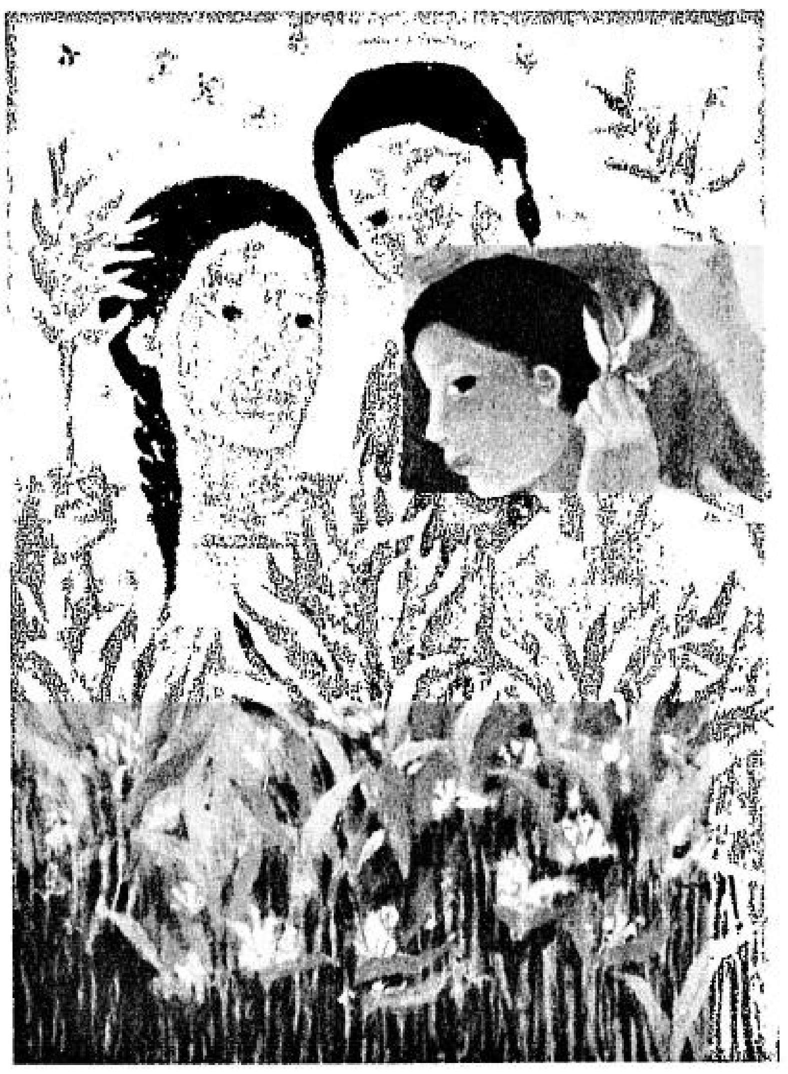


"DANCING-LADIES"



"HELICONIAS"

She walks in beauty

By Constantino C. Tejero

IF we would have our first woman National Artist for the Visual Arts, it should be Anita Magsaysay-Ho. The lady is now 90 but she still paints with such consistency and beauty the viewer feels blessed and marvels that such a spirit still walks the earth.

We're not exaggerating. Go to SM Megamall and see her latest exhibit in Crucible Gallery and marvel to your heart's content. It's a slim collection but its richness overflows.

This consists of three 23.25" x 16.5" pieces in acrylic on board ("Dancing-Ladies," "Heliconias," "Peanut Vendors"), all done this year; a mixed-media on paper from 2002 ("Feeding the Chickens"); two watercolor on paper from 2001 and 1985 ("Santan," "Basket and Pomegranate"); two colored pencil on paper from 1992 ("Flowers," "Manila Bay"); and six pencil drawings on paper from 1990-98 ("Two Women with Orchids," "Two Women with Basket," "Women with Baskets," "Standing Nude," "Sitting Nude," "Nude 3").

The three pieces in acrylic show the familiar imagery: that figure composition of a trio of maidens surrounded by flowers or fruits, in a dance or a huddle, typically with bandannas, and almond eyes on goldenly browned faces like flashes in the dark.

A peculiar glow suffuses the skin and faces. Emerging from dark surroundings, the effect is a lovely incandescence.

But while earlier the faces were softly oval, now they're angular, with squarish jaws counterpoising the high cheekbones. Still in their aspects meet all the best of dark and bright.

Typical and atypical

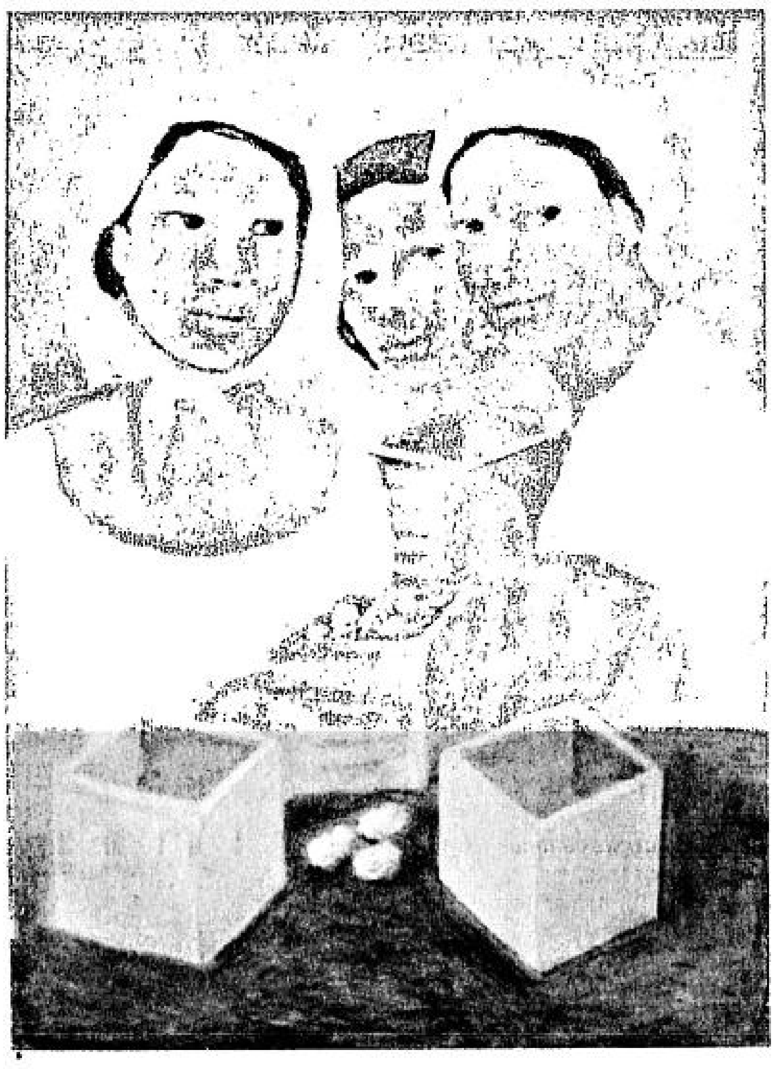
The pieces are also notable for the shift in the artist's chromatics. Whereas in her recent exhibit the canvases blazed with neon hues, now the color tones have darkened, the hues have become more expressive, almost approaching Gauguin.

Here she seems to be returning to the dark tones of her neorealist works more than half a century ago. But, with their brilliance of hues and stark contrast of colors, these paintings still burn the eyes.

The exhibit's centerpiece is "Dancing-Ladies," showing half-figures of the three lasses dressed in blue, red and green surrounded by yellow efflorescence, against a dark-green background. These women don't seem to be dancing, so presumably the title refers to the name of the flower. A white-winged, yellow-bodied bumblebee hovers on the upper left corner of the pictorial frame.

"Peanut Vendbrs" shows the maidens with four wooden measuring boxes, one *ganta* brimming over with peanuts in shells. It is atypically composed of geometrics, all straight lines and regular curves, and planes of color richly toned and near-monochromatic in ochre, yellow, brown, sienna, with tinges of green.

"Heliconias" has the lasses, now with naked braided hair, plucking the spearlike blossoms of the flowers which cover half of their bodies in burnt orange, ripe yellow, flame-red, against a wash of aquamarine. Small yellow butterflies hover overhead.



"PEANUT Vendors"

"Two Women with Orchids" seems like a study for the third painting, done 10 years earlier. "Two Women with Basket," "Women with Baskets" and the three nudes are mere sketches, studies in composition.

"Flowers," in pink, green and tinges of blue, is a typical floral still life yet notable for its repeat forms and contrast of lines and curves.

More notable is "Santan," composed of five roundish forms in watercolor of red, blue, green and a brown wash. It is a small grouping in the center of a white plane, yet it has attained volume and mass solidity through the manner of composition.

Formula or variation

The exhibit runs until May 16, nine days before Magsaysay-Ho turns 90. That's one month and three weeks of show, which is rare for a gallery in a mall, but rightly deserved by an artist such as she.

Studying at the University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts in the 1930s, the budding artist was mentored by Fabian de la Rosa, Fernando and Pablo Amorsolo, Vicente Rivera, Ireneo Miranda. The influence of one mentor was such that she was dubbed "the female Amorsolo."

But then she also studied at the School of Design under Victorio Edades, the Father of Modern Art in the country, whom she later assisted in creating a fresco. Thus she was torn away from academicism and became our first female modernist.

The one title left that she hasn't achieved but richly deserves is the highest award this country can give to its artists.

Elderly artists like Magsaysay-Ho and Malang Santos are often accused of repeating themselves. But these people have attained such venerability they've earned the right to just coast along.

And we don't think their later works are formulaic, but, rather, variations on certain themes. Much like what an elderly musician would do, who would want to polish a melody to perfection.

'Closer' to his vision, expressively

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

A YOUNG and restless spirit, Gino Tioseco has finally mounted his first solo show. Having begun as a member of the Blumentritt Group with base at the Ad Infinitum Gallery in old San Juan, Tioseco has undergone a number of evolutions, both aesthetic and spiritual. But he has managed to come into his own.

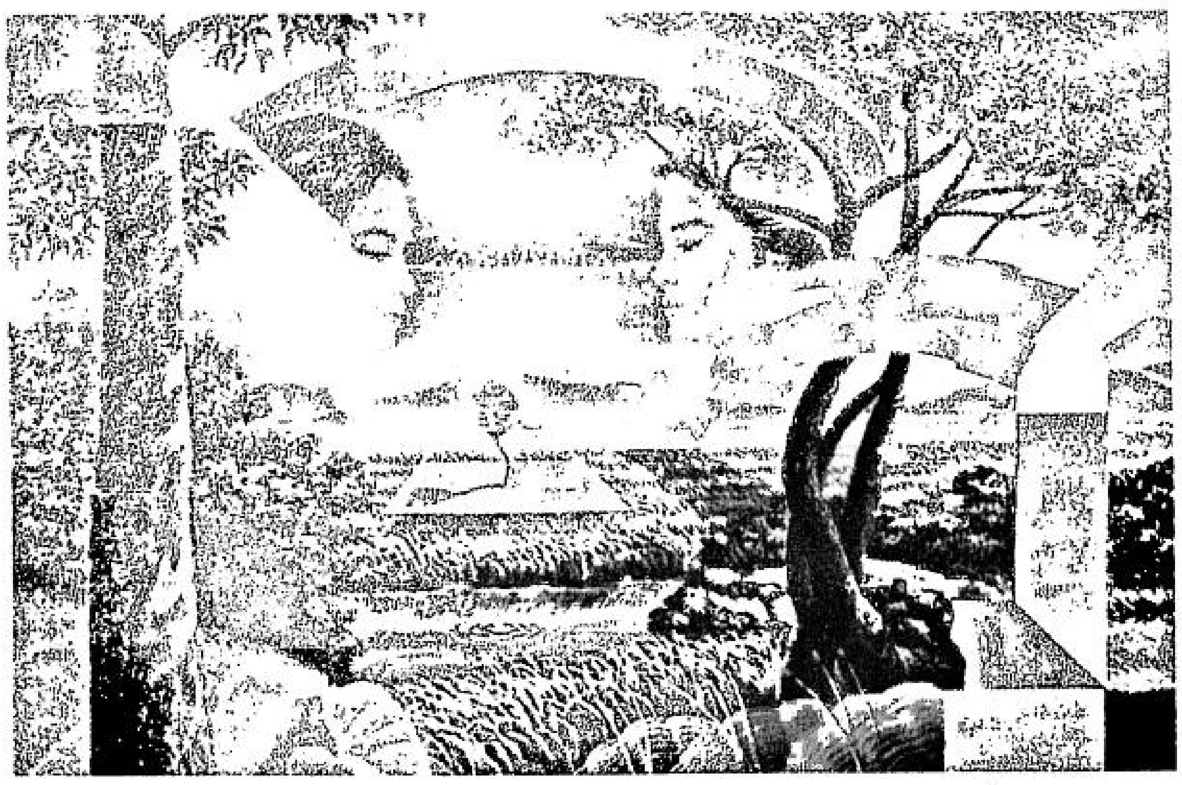
"Closer" (in Metro Gallery) is an exhibit that is sparingly resonant. Though he was slowly but surely moving to abstraction the last two years, the signs of a rebirth were not that decidedly clear until the Metro show.

And as expected, there is a celebratory air both in the size and colors of his canvases. Only 10 works hang in the cramped space, all unusually large in dimension (the average is 3 ft. x 4 ft.), and unabashedly abstract expressionist in fervor.

The works in acrylic purvey a markedly Asian identity, particularly East Asian, evident in the contrasting fields of colors as well as in the outpouring of textural effects that emanate from a tropical, or Asia-Pacific, sensibility.

One such work, in fact, shows the colors most associated with the Filipino—a heady profusion of reds, blues and yellows that overlap and superimpose with one another in a burst of energy.

There are other works, however, that show the artist's more spiritual side, works that are restrained and introspective in character, a foil to the more flamboyant pieces. Though the brushwork is no less vigorous, Tioseco has decided to temper his hues.



"A SURREAL Love," by Danilo Santiago

In showing both the carnal and the spiritual aspects of the artist's psyche, these works amply show the duality of human nature, as well as the two sides of the search for identity, inward and outward.

Tioseco's latest works amplify an abiding quest for identity. Both in form and substance, the artist is, indeed, moving closer to what he had originally sought out.

But the view on his canvases remains turbulent and the search will have to take on a higher and deeper plane.

Korean gesture at Rizal Park

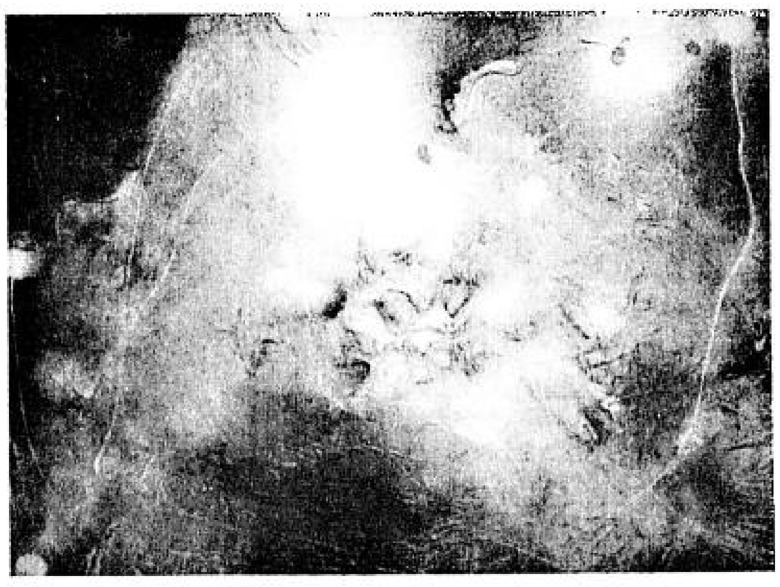
The Korea-Philippine Art Brain Exhibition at Kanlungan ng Sining (Rizal Park) is the second of a series of cultural exchanges between the two countries.

Hosted by the Art Association of the Philippines, the first of such activities took place last December at the GSIS Museum. A third will be held in July in the same venue, while the fourth and final exhibit, slated in August, will be in Seoul, Korea.

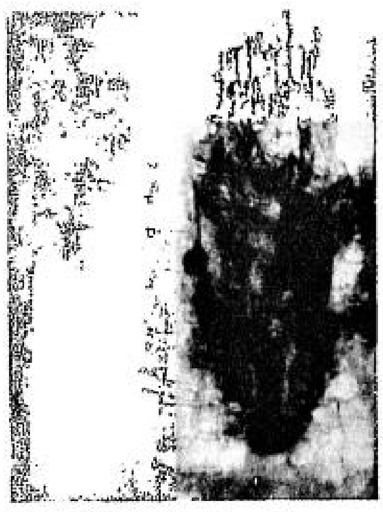
Korea has, of course, become the Asian country most at home in the Philippines, with over 300,000 Koreans visiting last year. It is only logical that the interaction spill over into the arts.

What is impressive is the amount of work the organizer has put into the project, with over 100 artists from Korea sending samples of their works.

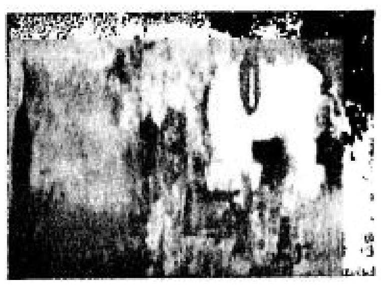
These works are eclectic in character, though they retain a basic aspect of their culture. The landscape theme dominates, though there are more contemporary works in both photography and computer-generated images, as modernity sweeps this highly industrialized nation.



"COSMIC Landscape," by Fred Ramirez



"UNTITLED," by Gino Tioseco



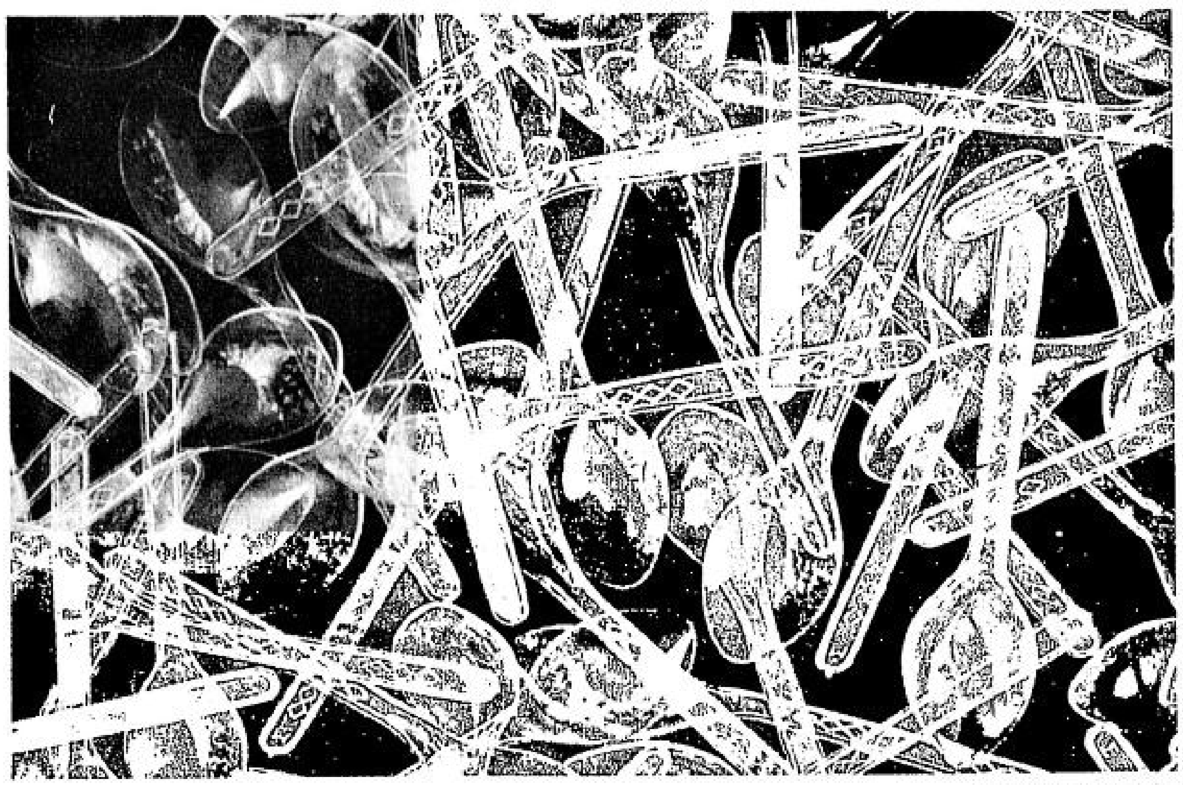
"UNTITLED"

There are also many young artists in this group, including a sizable number of women who capture a slice of life in the nation that has grown by leaps and bounds.

The Philippines is represented by 24 painters and a sculptor, who prefer to work along traditional themes. There are a few surprises at hand, with some brilliantly executed works, but generally the selection runs along the representational genre.

Time and space constraints notwithstanding, the show succeeds admirably in showing the vast artistic reservoir of Korea and the unstinting discipline and dedication of its artists.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com



"SPOONFUL," by Don Salubayba

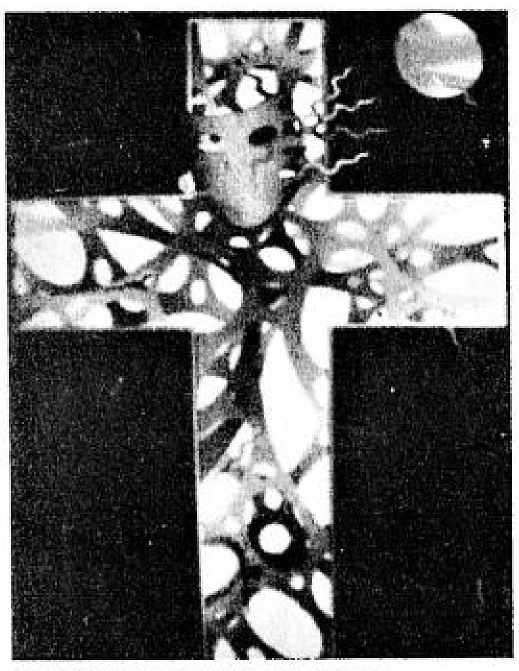
Sillada at Ricco-Renzo

Visual Arts

DANNY Sillada mounts his latest exhibit, "Dreamweaver," on April 27 at Ricco-Renzo Galleries, ground floor, IDC Manila, 210 N. Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. The show is a visual disclosure of the artist's inner conflicts, journeys and poetical observations. Sillada, who undertook philosophical and theological studies at the UST Ecclesiastical Faculties, is one of the leading artists of Mindanao. The exhibit runs until May 28.

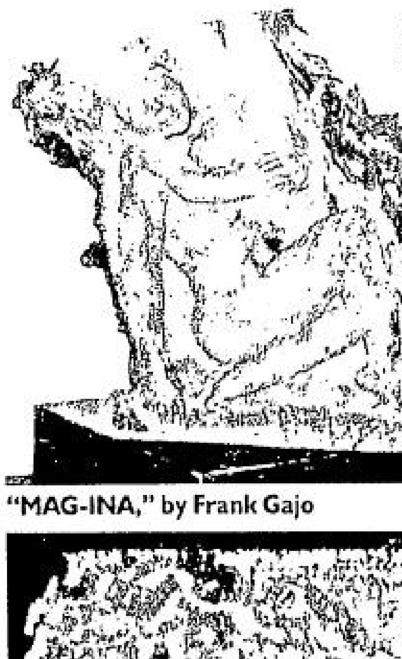
HENRI Cainglet is showing his latest works at the Art Center of SM Megamall. The works show his strength in colors. His overlay of color over color makes interesting tactile surfaces. He focuses now on textures by cutting into the canvases, filling them with longish insertions. The show also includes his new works in wood.

GALERIA de las Islas in Intramuros mounts "Body Scapes" until April 15 at the third floor, Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros; Manila. The exhibit features nude works in watercolor, pastel, oil, mixed media, pen and ink, as well as sculptures and photographs. Participating artists are Benny Buendia, Angel Cacnio, Allan Cosio, Andres Cubi, Fil dela Cruz, Antonio Doctor Garcia, Nards Miranda, Ton Raymundo, Gilbert Alberto, Frank Gajo, Wig Tysmans and Ruel Carlos.

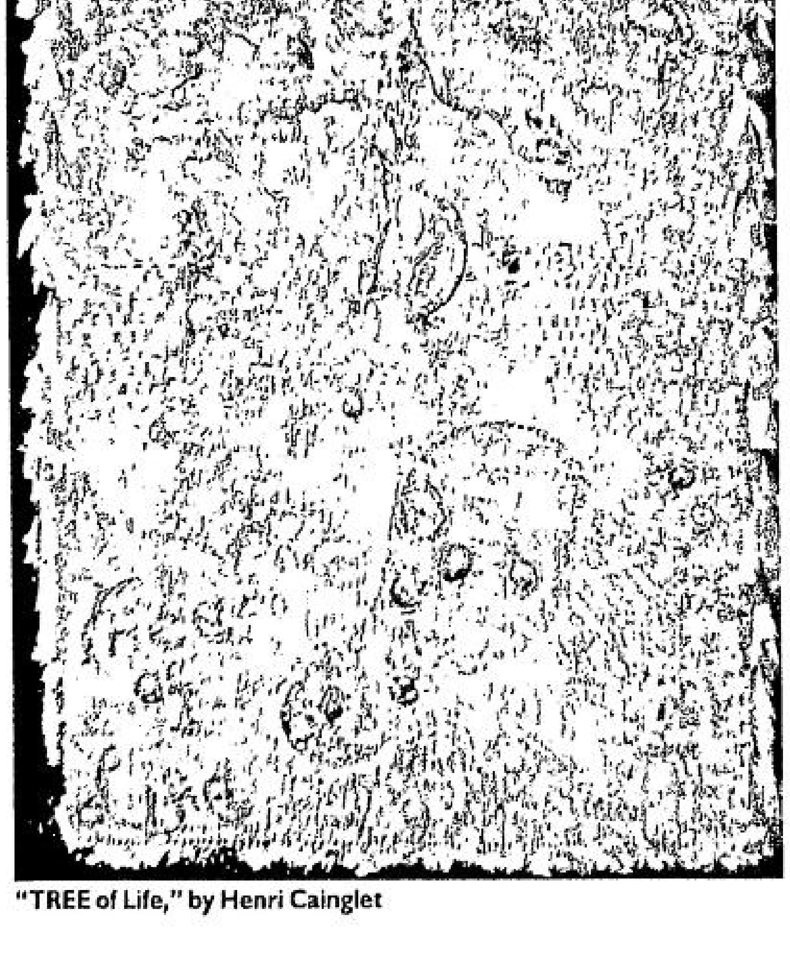


"BROKEN Vow," by Danny Sillada

THE SINING Marikina group show opens on April 17 at the Saturday Group Gallery, 2nd floor, Ali Mall, Araneta Center, QC. The exhibit will run until May 5. Participating artists are Rene Belison, Monn Cañeza, Rene Clemente, Jun Concepcion, Perry Cruz, Noli Española, Ron Eustaquio, Ernesto Flores, Al Giroy, Jose Hombrebueno, Jose Ibay, Ren Maglalang, Dennis Miguel, Cirilo Panerio, Willy Pascua, Ernie Patricio, Andy Pernia, Roland Rosacay, Elmer Torio, Andy Urag and Lydia Velasco.



"MAG-INA," by Frank Gajo



"TREE of Life," by Henri Cainglet

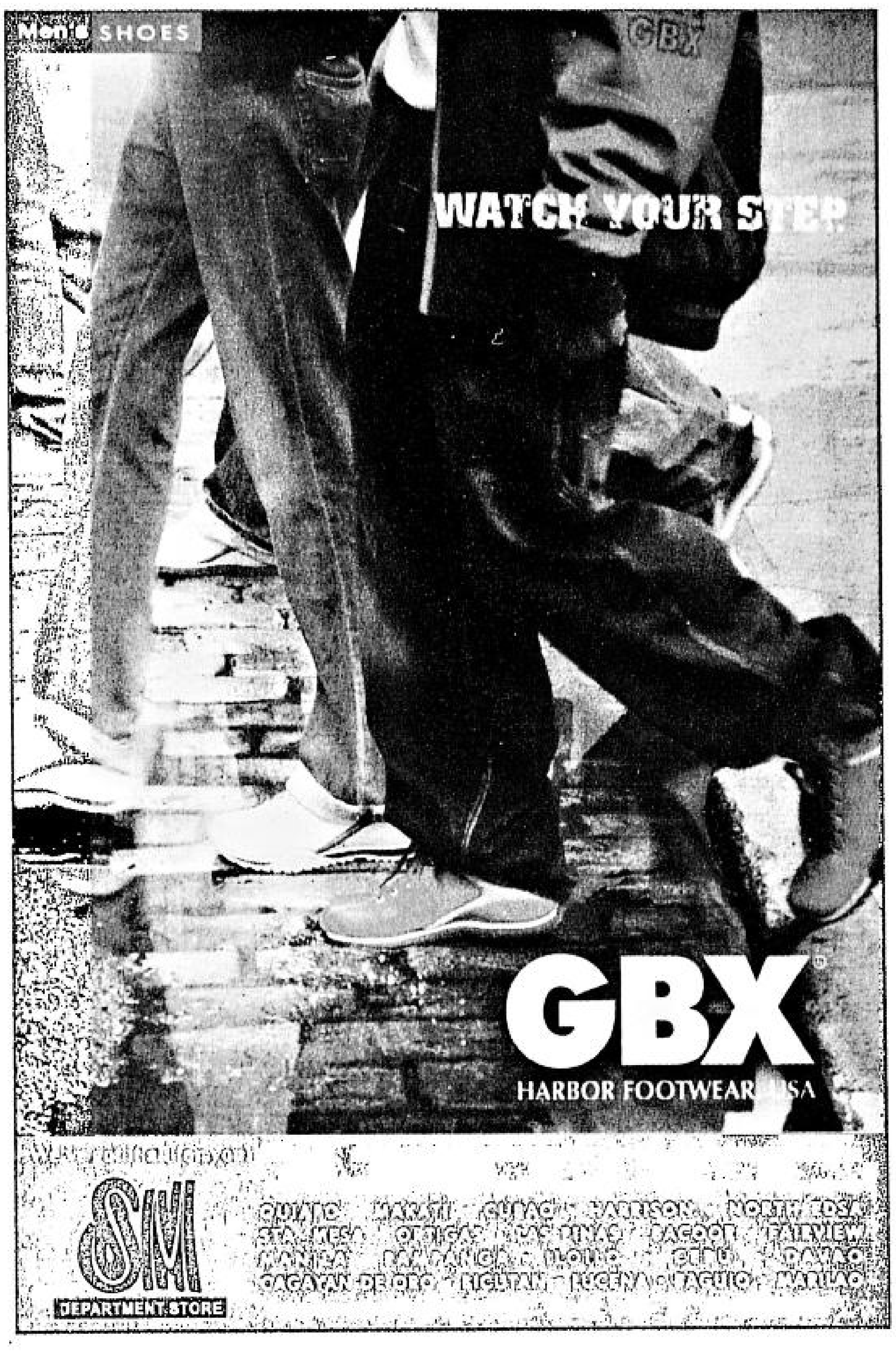
MARC Cosico and Don Salubayba team up for a mixed media exhibition entitled "Spoonful Discard." Salubayba melts and distorts plastic spoons into irregular forms installed inside light boxes while Cosico casts discarded phone cards into figures that depict how we communicate in a consumerist society. The exhibit may be viewed until April 25 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Bulwagang Fernando Amorsolo (Small Gallery).

CONTRERAS Sculptures Gallery presents Tala Isla-Contreras' "Si Pinay, Si Inay, Inang Kalikasan at Makabagong Babaylan" until April 27 at The Artwalk, 4th level, Megamall A. Using the shrine and altar as format and motif, this exhibition reflects the artist's lifetime preoccupation with woman as figure and theme in her art and life.

FERNANDO Sena conducts a workshop on sketching and painting for adults and children aged 8 years old and above. Sessions will be held on April 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 10, 17 and 24, 4-6:30 p.m., at the ground floor of CyberMall, Eastwood City, E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5), QC. Call 6876771 to 74, 9246425 or 9258801.

SM Supermalls, Nestlé and Faber-Castell will hold workshops on hard-boiled egg painting, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; funny bunny paper tearing art and Easter mobile cut-out art, 1-3 p.m.; and modelling clay, 3-5 p.m., today. Call 3617391-92.

THE AUSTRALIAN Embassy Manila, in cooperation with the Philippine-Australia Studies Network (Ateneo Chapter) and Green Papaya Art Projects, presents a special screening of Robert Nery's "Black Nazarene" on April 19, 6 p.m., at Ateneo de Manila University's Escaler Hall. The 95-minute film is open to the public and will be followed by a forum to be conducted by Nery, who was born in the Philippines and now lives in Sydney. He graduated from Sydney University with an honors degree in Social Anthropology, and a major in Philosophy. He was editor of the journal Photofile, published by the Australian Centre for Photography in 1989-90, and has published film and art criticism in various magazines. Call 4266068 or 7578135.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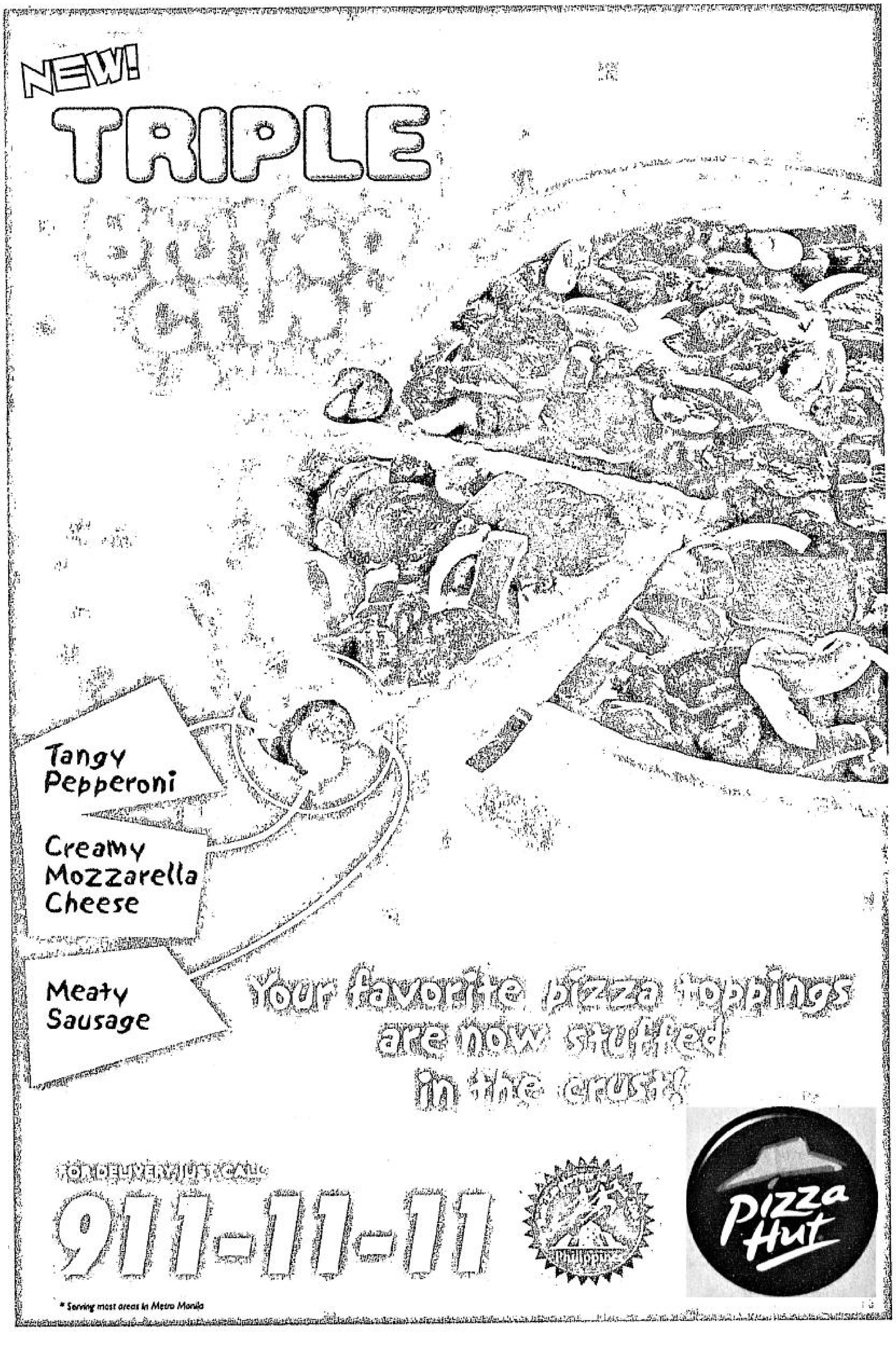
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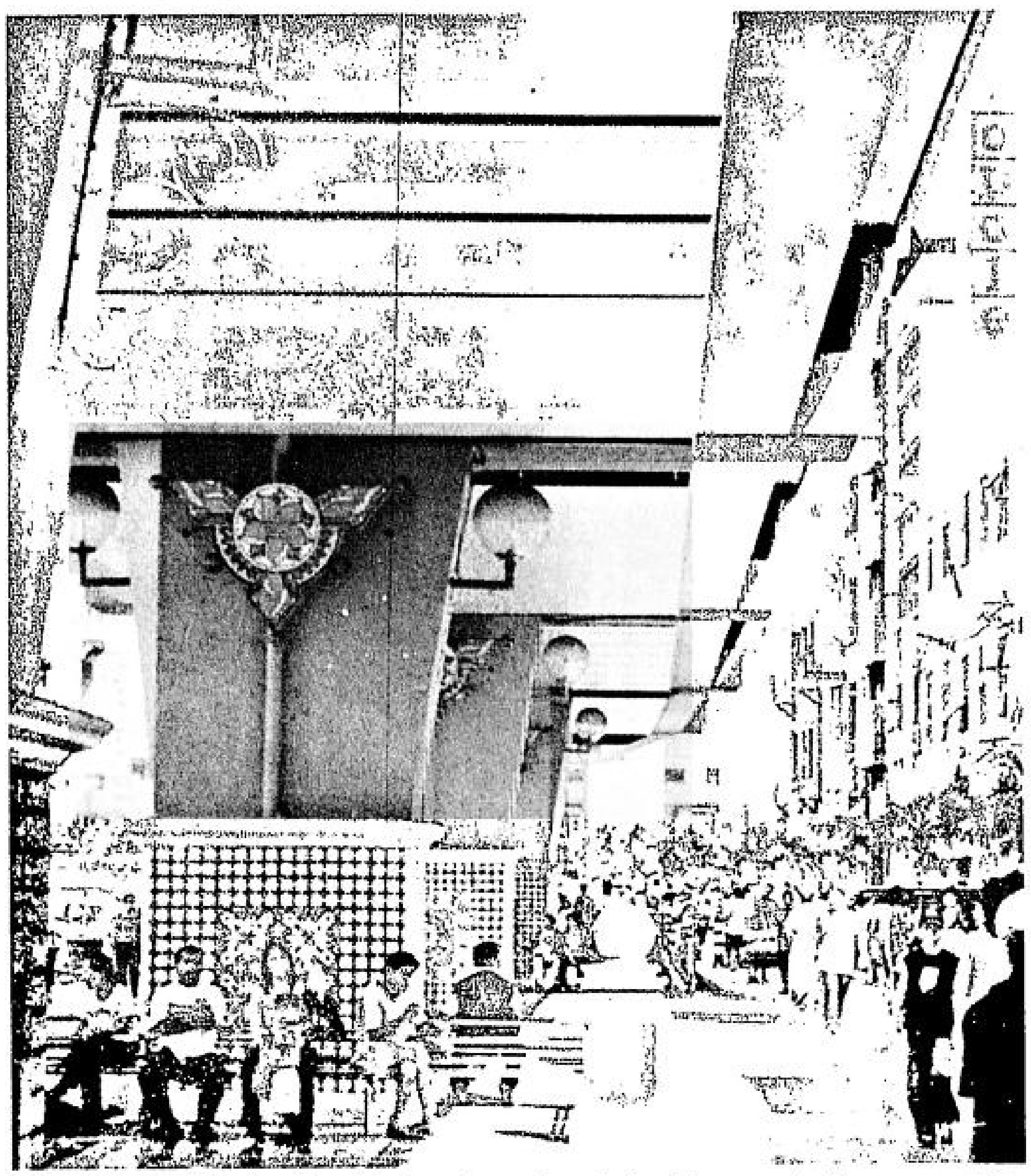
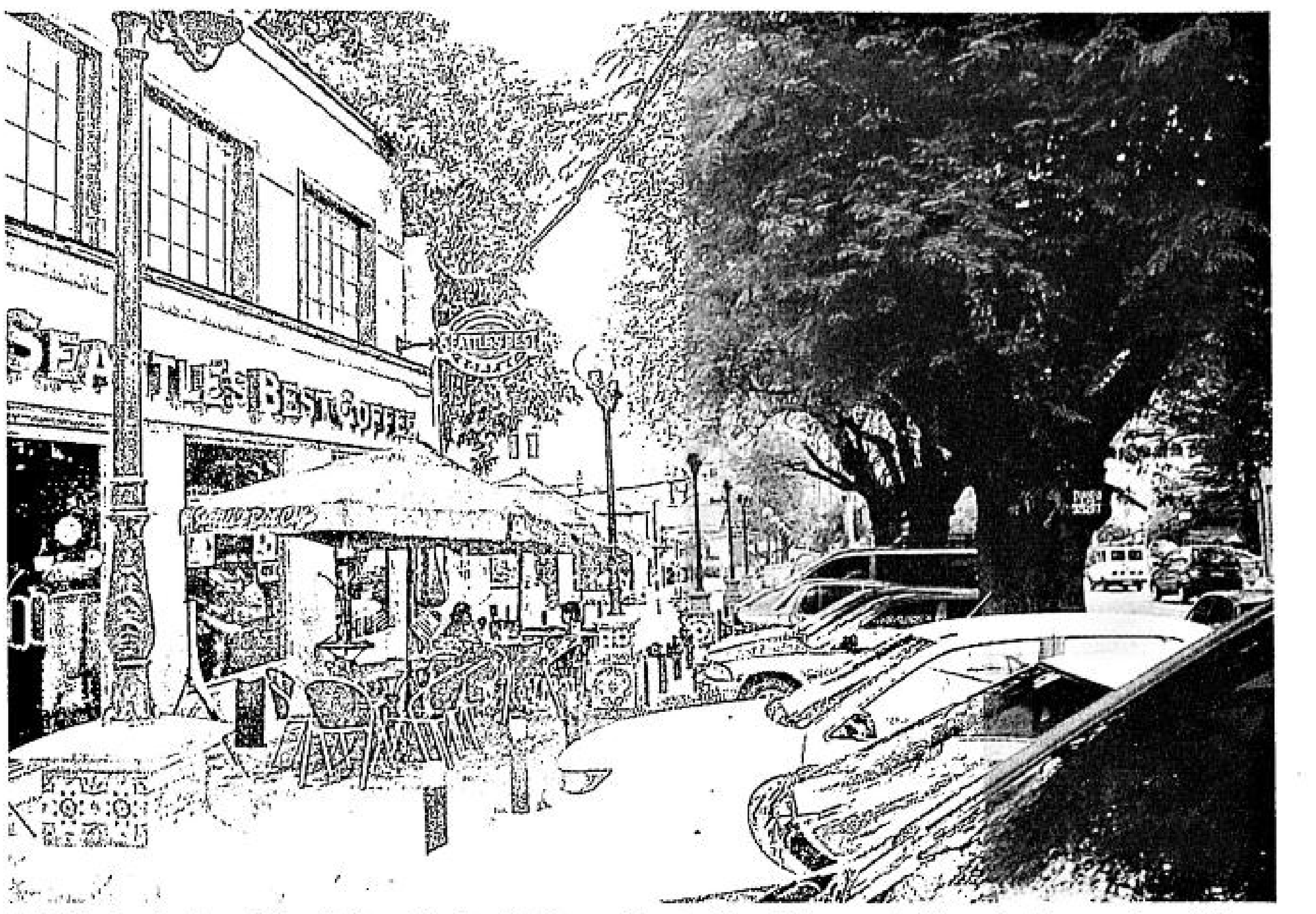


IT'S called gentrification when tiles, benches and a coat of paint resurrect a former no-man's land under the elevated railway tracks in Avenida Rizal Avenue and breathe new life to decaying neighborhoods.



A ROW of parked cars is kept at bay, allowing the Tomas Morato sidewalk to come to life under the grandeur of the sampaloc trees, which gave the street its former name of Sampaloc Avenue.

How about going downtown once again?

From page F1

shopping and business activity to suburban commercial locations.

Manila suffered after Makati lured its business center away in the 1960s; it has never regained its former commercial supremacy.

Cebu has lost much of its downtown commercial activity to the new malls and business parks developed away from the city center. Moving away from the city center is a global trend.

As affluence increased, cars were readily available to take people away from dense city centers to their new suburban homes that were built close to large stores surrounded by convenient free parking lots.

Suburban living has become today's preferred lifestyle. People favor large shopping malls with department stores and full-service supermarkets that usually are built close to modern office centers. The days of the friendly neighborhood shops that were the trademark of the old downtowns simply disappeared.

A number of reasons caused the deterioration of the old downtowns. Some causes are external, such as changes to the 19th-century river transport that was replaced by a railway system in the late 19th century.

In the 20th century, motor vehicles clogged downtown streets that were not designed to accommodate today's traffic. Our streets are inadequate and parking insufficient to accommodate the large number of cars we have today.

Other causes internal to the downtown area are the critical shortage of space and the high rent, leading businesses to move to outlying, more affordable locations.

Another factor is the lack of maintenance and proper zoning, as well as traffic congestion. City governments lack the forward vision to effectively manage urban growth.

Those reasons caused the mass movement of residents away from the city proper to new subdivisions in suburbs. With this move, downtowns lost their primary function. They were no longer the retail center. One by one, downtowns all over the world began to die.

Recent trend

With the realization that the traditional downtown is now at a competitive disadvantage, the practice of downtown revitalization has emerged locally within the past year. Examples are the recent revitalization of Roxas Boulevard, Avenida Rizal, Tomas Morato Avenue.

Revitalization does not have to be done on a big scale. Community-led efforts such as simply clearing streets and alleys of garbage, identification of additional parking spaces or repainting of buildings have given a much-needed upgrading to dilapidated districts in the city center.

Just as physical improvements are varied, so are the various sources of support. Some downtown revitalization programs successfully rely on local private initiatives, while local governments spearhead other efforts.

Other revitalization projects represent a public-private cooperative effort, while others are strictly locally financed.

Far Eastern University leads an outstanding community effort to revitalize some streets in the University Belt of Manila, focusing on Nicanor Reyes Street (formerly Morayta).

Under the university's initiative, the building owners along the street are forming an owners' association. Together they have lobbied with City Hall to improve lighting on their street. Some of the building owners have voluntarily begun to spruce up their buildings.

The movement is growing. Now neighboring streets are following the example of the public-private cooperation established by FEU.

Sydney example

One of the more successful revitalization projects is the creation of the Pitt Street Mall in Sydney. Pitt Street in central Sydney was pedestrianized. New lighting and street furniture were installed. Commercial buildings were encouraged to refurbish and to reconfigure their lower floors into shop spaces.

Next, each building interconnected with its neighbor on different levels, creating a multi-level mall on either side of the street. Pretty soon people were returning to Pitt Street for shopping and relaxation, precipitating the rebirth of the city center.

Downtown revitalization produces a virtual renaissance in what once was a deteriorated area. Revitalized downtowns remain active throughout the day and night. People are drawn to a new offering of a safer, more attractive and pleasant environment.

Private businesses reap the benefit of this transformation. Business gain from the increase of people returning to revitalized downtowns. Retail sales increase, bringing a rise in real-estate occupancy and an increase in property values.

The benefits are not solely economic. A revitalized downtown reestablishes the recognition of the city center as a focal point for community life, where a mix of business, employment, cultural and shopping opportunities are found.

The one-day seminar will make an in-depth examination of our country's downtowns and find viable solutions to restore their lost vibrancy.

Mayors Lito Atienza of Manila and Sigfrido Tinga of Taguig are resource persons. Business leaders from Ayala Land, Bonifacio West Development, Robinsons Homes and Central Country Estates are participating.

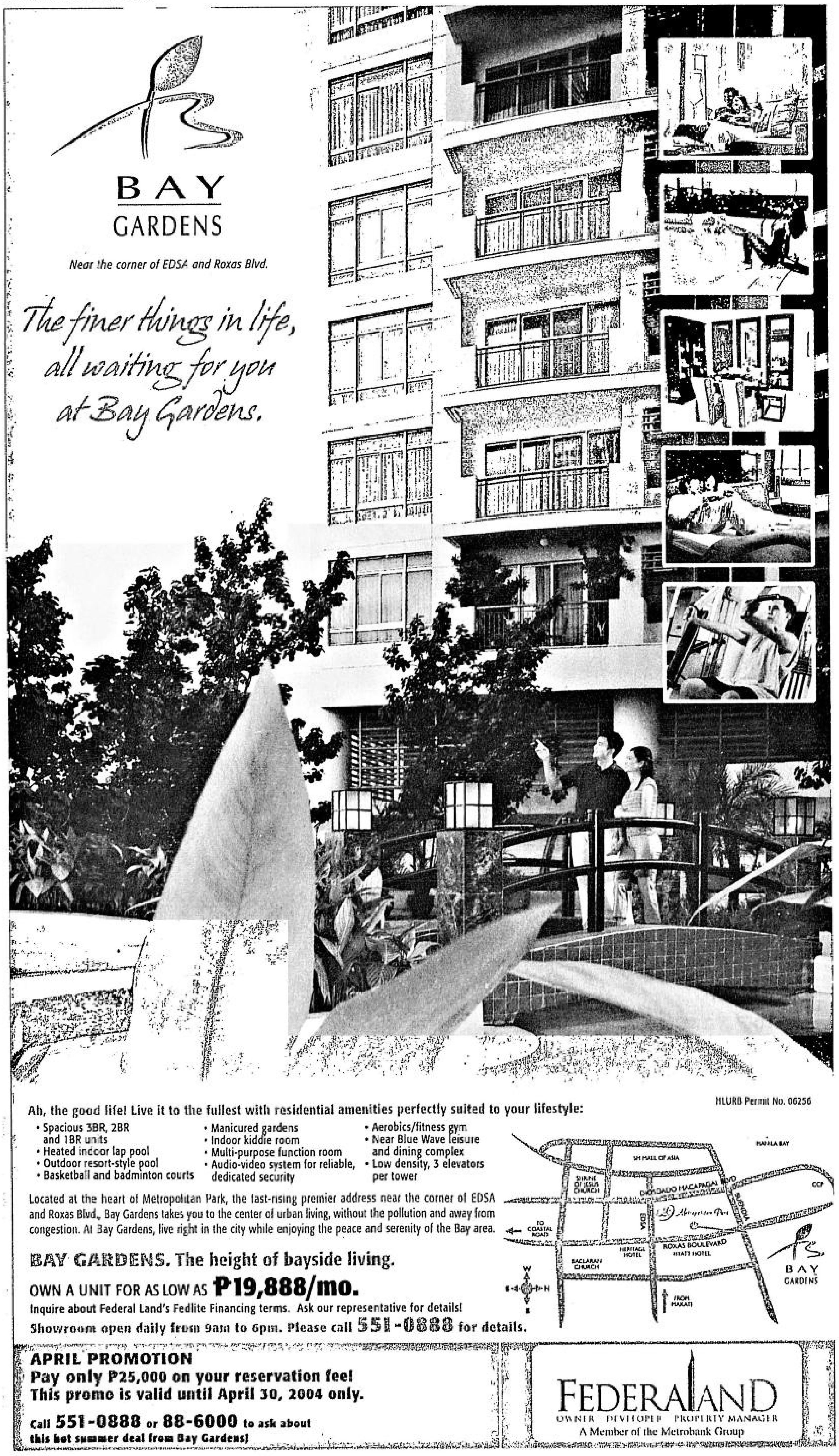
Other participants are senior government officials from HUDCC, HLURB, MMDA, DENR, and Pag-ibig Fund.

Urban-planning professionals Art Corpuz, Felino Palafox Jr., Nestor Mangiko, Dan Silvestre, Paulo Alcazaren and Nathaniel von Einsiedel contribute their expertise.

Aside from the Urban Partnerships Foundation, sponsors include the Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners, National Real Estate Association and GHK International Limited.

To register or to obtain further information, call Virginia Rodriguez at 8961902, 8951812; fax 890 2480; or e-mail upf@skyinet.net

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com



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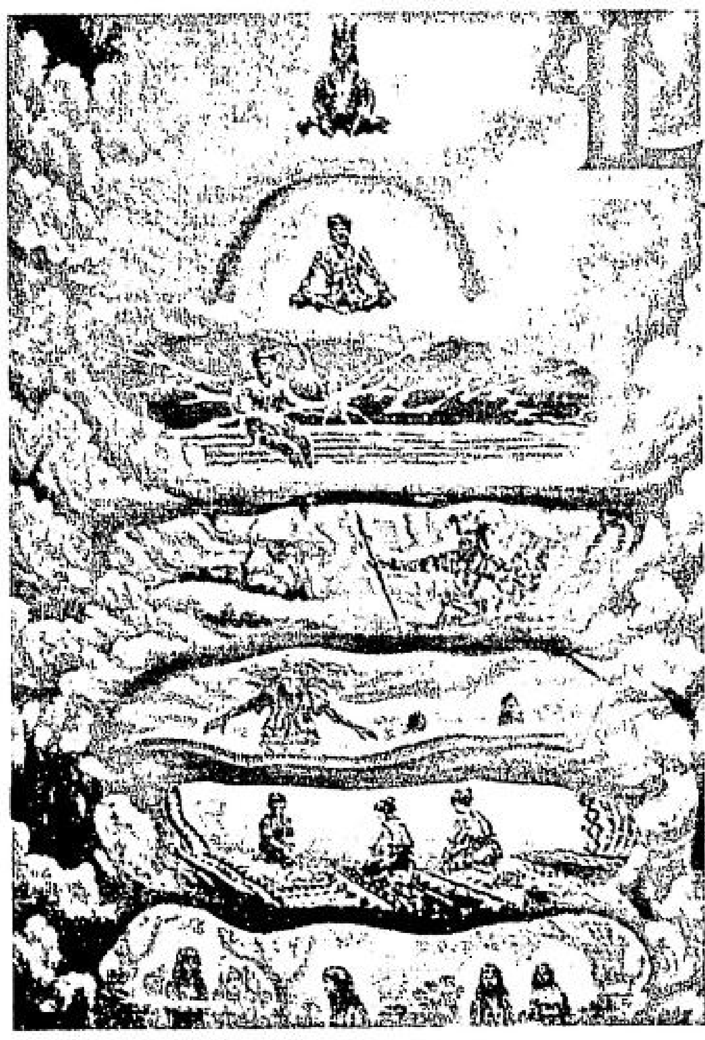

PENNESSENCIO Estarte's rendition of the mythical seven layers of Bukidnon heaven, supported by two trees

A passion for Mindanao's poetic myths

By Christine Godinez-Ortega
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ONLY after years of folkloric research and the guidance of Jesuit priests did the artist Pennessencio "Nonoy" C. Estarte hone his painting techniques using various media of latex, enamel, oil, watercolor, chalk and charcoal, interpreting Mindanao's myths and legends and, occasionally, religious subjects.

Besides Estarte's representational and surrealist paintings on topical, socio-realist issues, his more well-known works include two volumes of comic books, "Illustrated Folktales," published by Xavier University (XU) with fellow artist Albert San Juan Vamenta, the murals in oil of the "Birhen sa Kota," two versions of the "Coming of Christianity in Cagayan de Oro" and a portrait of St. Ignatius Loyola.

Now 53 years old and a recipient of a 1991 Papal Award, among others, for his body of work, he is assistant curator on files and records at XU's Museo de Oro in Cagayan de Oro City.

At 5 years old, Estarte learned to draw from his parents and, later, from his grade school teachers in Malangas, Zamboanga del Sur.

A PASSION/ G2

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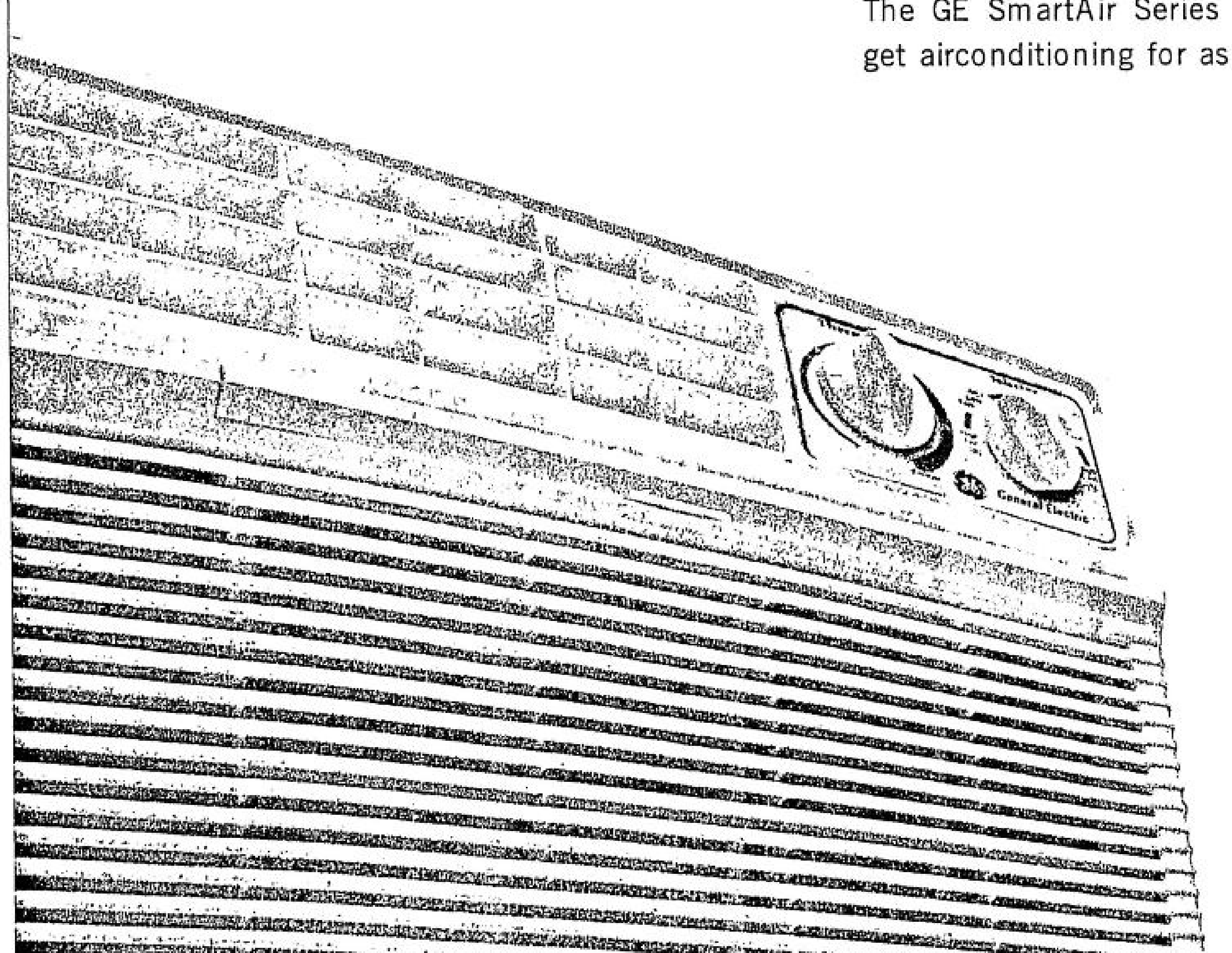

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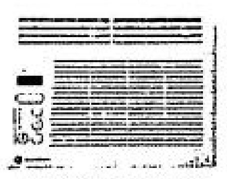
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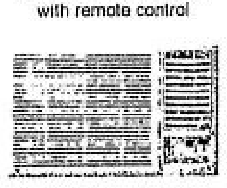
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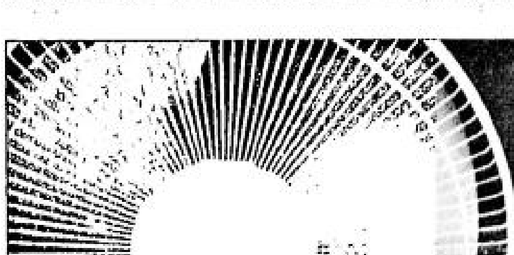
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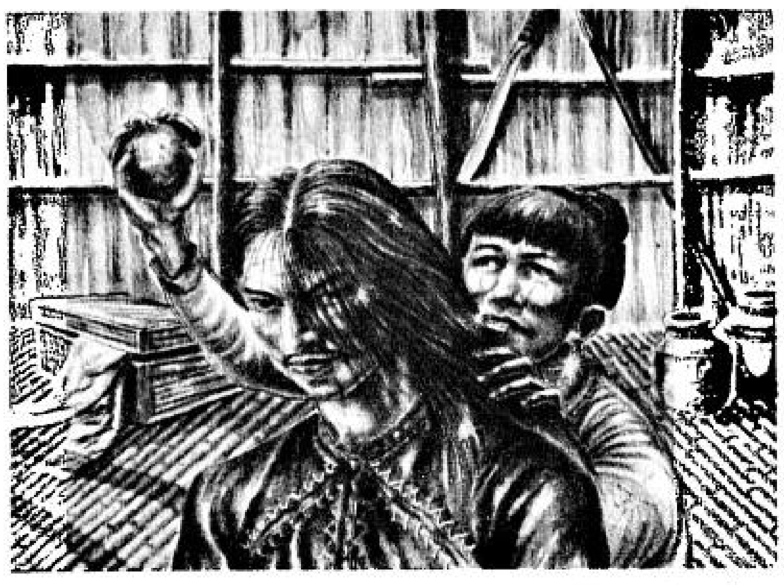
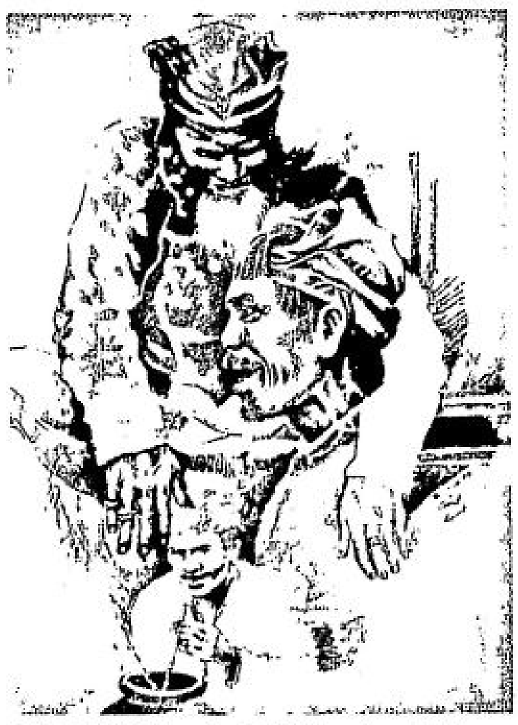
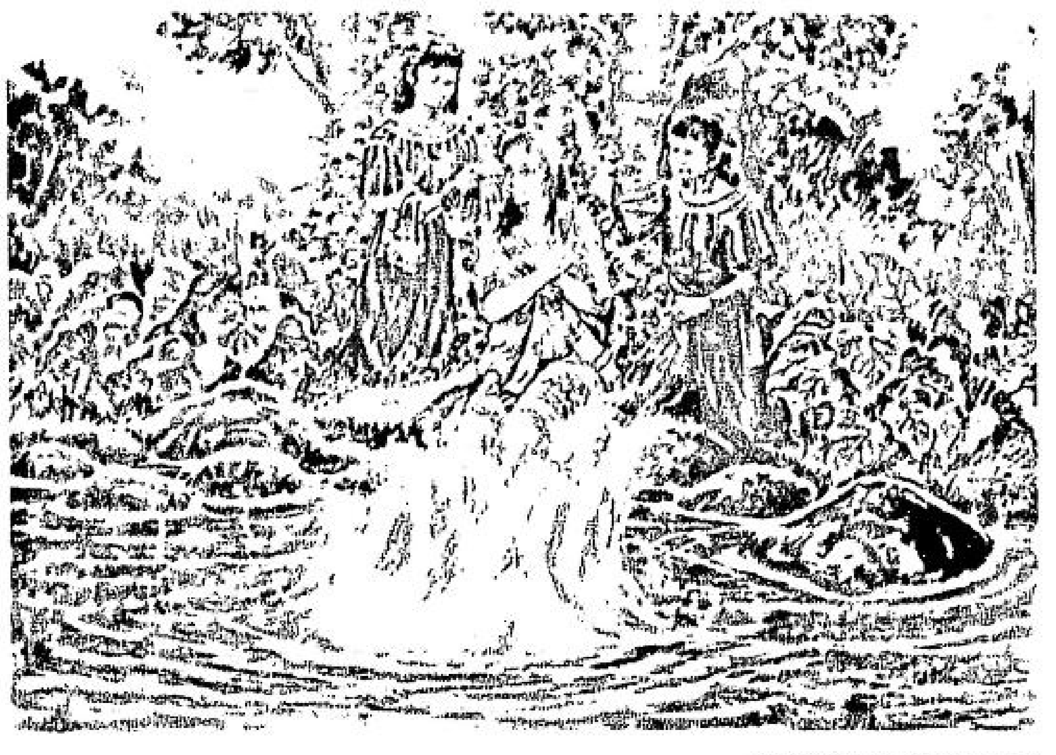
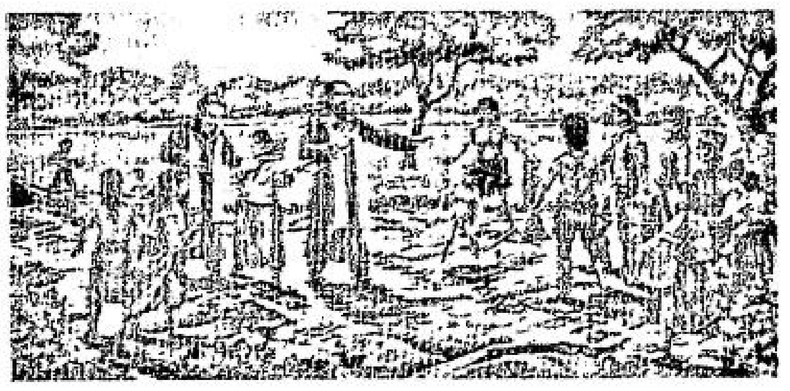

SUBANEN epic hero Taake prepares for a journey. His mother cries as she oils and combs his hair. Museo de Oro Collection


SUBANEN *thimu'ay* (tribal head or chief)


"KAGAYHA-AN," named after the princess who accidentally drowned while bathing in the river with her entourage

A passion for Mindanao's poetic myths


MURAL: The Coming of Christianity to Cagayan de Oro

From page G1

Largely self-taught, he lost interest in his studies in high school, preferring to spend time drawing and collecting art books.

When his father died, Estarte supported the family by decorating jeepneys, doing billboards and accepting lettering jobs, always preferring watercolor over other media "because it is water-based and not hazardous to one's health."

These artworks in his hometown in Malangas caught the eye of the parish priest, who invited Nonoy to stay in the convent and commissioned him to do religious paintings and murals during religious feasts. In time, Estarte also began organizing seminars and other activities for the town's youth.

Knowledgeable

The artist is articulate in English and is knowledgeable about his craft and the fine points of cultural anthropology. He has no college degree, but has had group and one-man exhibits around the country, in Germany and the Netherlands with his over 300 watercolor paintings on the *gumans* (Subanen folk poetry), the story of Agyu (Black Datu of the Bukidnons) and the various episodes from the Arumanen-Manobo epic, "Ulahingan."

Influenced by anthropologists, among them Fr. Francisco R. Demetrio, SJ, and Dr. Linda Burton who were implementing the XU Museo de Oro's policy to popularize Mindanao's folk arts and culture, Estarte began to study the Mindanao epics thoroughly before determining their "highlights" and "visualizing and interpreting" them with the help of Fr. Demetrio and other museum staff.

During those early years as a museum illustrator, he'd skip work by joining Burton's and folklorist Joy Enriquez's trips to Bukidnon and Zamboanga to observe tribal rituals, the colors and designs of their attire, the architecture of *tulugans* (houses), the furniture and household implements, the carvings on weapons, the make of musical instruments and other aspects of the material culture of the Manobo and Subanen.

Along with these, Estarte developed a good picture of the natural environments that nurture tribal lifestyles and world views.

The more difficult part for him in these cultural immersions was studying the contrasting physical characteristics of the Manobo and Subanen. Today, he characterizes the Subanen as "taller, with broader shoulders and straight hair, with chinky eyes and a high-bridged nose set on an elongated face," compared to the "not-so-tall Manobo with round eyes, high cheekbones and curly hair."

Estarte has had various stints as art consultant of many agencies like the Malasag Eco Village, as illustrator of local newspapers and books on folklore, as founder-organizer-lecturer of the Oro Arts Guild Inc. and as coordinator of Tokyo's Sophia University Meguko Program in Cagayan de Oro City for poor, deserving students.

Indeed, he has gone a long way from his beginnings, painting jeepneys and billboards in his hometown. But the one thing that has remained constant to Estarte, the self-taught artist, is his passion for the poetic myths of Mindanao.

Sample works reproduced with permission from the artist and Xavier University's Museo de Oro

ESTARTE with one of his paintings, "Tampuda ha Balagon," depicting a peace pact between Lumads, Christians and Muslims in Talakag, Bukidnon PHOTO BY BOBBY TIMONERA

15 fellows off to Iligan workshop

THE MINDANAO Creative Writers Group, the MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology and the National Commission for Culture and Arts, in cooperation with the Iligan City Government and CJA Printing Press, announce the names of 15 writing fellows to the Eleventh Iligan National Writers Workshop on April 26-29 in Iligan City.

Luzon: (Poetry-English/Filipino): Rodrigo Velbis De la Peña Jr.—Balaoan, La Union/UP-Diliman; Mark Anthony R. Cayanan—Quezon City/UP Diliman; Genaro R. Gojo Cruz—Bulacan/Philippine Normal University; (Fiction Filipino/English): Louie Jon A. Sanchez—Manila/University of Santo Tomas; and Bernice Campos Roldan—Quezon City/UP Diliman.

Visayas: (Poetry-English/Filipino/Hiligaynon): Jasmine Nikki C. Paredes—Cebu City/St. Theresa's College; Winton Lou Gonzaga Ynion—Iloilo City/West Visayas State University; Emmanuel A. Lerona—Iloilo City/UP in the Visayas; (Fiction-Cebuano): Danessa B. Alinsug—Cebu City/UP Cebu College; (Play-English): Imelda Agustin-Ruiz—Cebu City/UP Diliman.

Mindanao: (Poetry-English/Cebuano/Filipino): Zola Gonzalez and Arlene Yandug—Maramag, Bukidnon/Xavier University and Ateneo de Cagayan; Nelia Gayosa Balgoa—Maramag,Bukidnon/Mindanao State University-Marawi; (Fiction-Cebuano): Blanche Y. Gutib—Davao City/UP Mindanao; and Brecil M. Kempis—Lanao del Sur/UP Mindanao.

Panelists this year are Merlie M. Alunan, Leoncio P. Deriada, Erlinda Kintanar-Alburo, Jaime An Lim, German V. Gervacio, Rosario Cruz-Lucero, Timothy Montes, Steven Patrick C. Fernandez, Christine Godinez-Ortega, and this year's keynote lecturer, prize-winning fictionist Charlson Ong.

Children's museum turns 10

"Touch, Discover, Explore!"
By Jacqueline V. Franquelli
Museo Pambata Foundation, Inc.
2004, 165 pages

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

UY, THERE's a child in the room. Seated on a chair, he pulls himself on a chain continuously until he is suspended in the air.

What on earth is he doing? Ah, he is learning how elevators work, explains a museum staffer. Oh, I see. This is the Science Room.

In another exhibit, there's a little girl. She is looking at a photo of Andres Bonifacio, and appears to be talking to him by telephone. Oh, she is listening *pala* to a voice recording on the life of the Katipunan *supremo*. This happens to be the Heroes' Circle.

These are among the attractions of the Museo Pambata, the country's first living, interactive museum for children, located at Roxas Boulevard corner South Drive, Ermita, Manila.

The Museo is celebrating its 10th year. A highlight of the celebrations is the just-launched book that describes what the Museo is all about, and how it has developed and progressed since 1994.

Mother-daughter project

Patterned after successful children's museums in the United States, the Museo is the brainchild of a mother-and-daughter team, Estefania Aldaba-Lim, a former social services and development minister and United Nations special envoy, and daughter Nina Lim-Yuson, who holds a doctorate in Education from the University of the Philippines.

It all started in the late 1970s when Dr. Yuson and her children visited the Boston Children's Museum. "It had a freewheeling atmosphere that allowed children to be their probing, animated selves," says author Franquelli.

Children were running around. There was an old attic where kids could put on clothes from the past and masks from the Pacific islands, a xoetrope where they made movie strips, and a roomful of junk for creating new things.

Thus was born the idea of a similar museum in Manila. But it did not gain ground until much later, when mother and daughter got together, raised funds, painstakingly restored the old Elks Club building (owned by the City of Manila), and instituted a system whereby *ninongs* (godfathers) and *ninangs* (godmothers) would assist the museum financially.

The Museo Pambata was inaugurated on Dec. 21, 1994 and has since been experienced by more than 1.7 million people, most of them children with their parents and teachers. Here, children are encouraged to learn through all their senses, to touch, smell, hear and see.

The exhibits are permanent, but considered "works in progress."

There are six interactive exhibits with different themes: Maynila Noon (Old Manila), Kalikasan (Environment), Tuklas! (Science through Discovery), Katawan Ko (Body Works), Paglaki Ko (When I Grow Up/Career Options), and Bata sa Mundo (Children in the Global Village).

Outreach

While there are in-house educational programs and storytelling sessions, activities are not confined to within the museum.

The Museo has launched traveling exhibits that promote children's rights, literacy, reading and patriotism (one theme was "I Am Proud to Be a Filipino!"). Extension programs have spread the benefits of a children's museum to the regions.

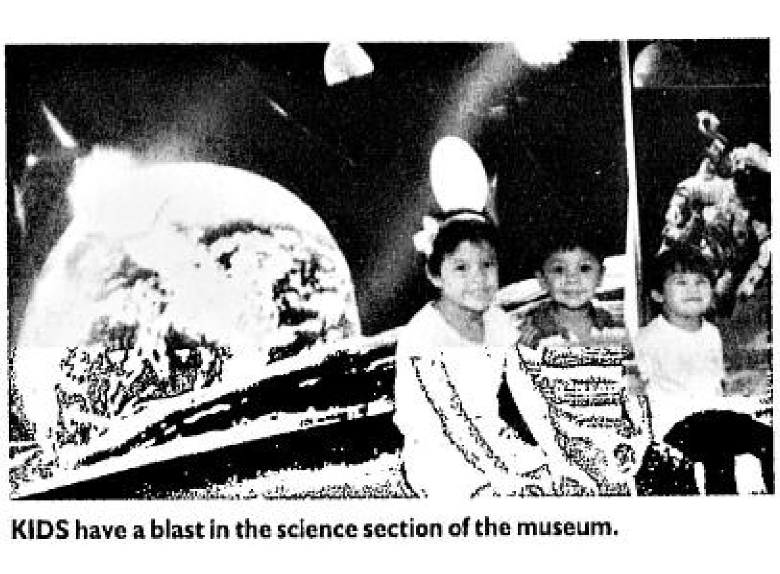
The second part of the book, in fact, is a compilation of lectures by various authors on how to establish children's museums.

The campaign has paid off.

A Museo sang Bata sa Negros is now operational in Sagay City, Negros Occidental. Others will be set up in Quezon City, Subic, and the cities of Cebu, Iligan, Dagupan, and Legazpi.

Congratulations are in order for all those behind the success of the Museo Pambata in Manila, the City of Our Affections, to borrow a phrase from National Artist Nick Joaquin.

NINA Lim Yuson reads to kids at the Museo Pambata.


KIDS have a blast in the science section of the museum.

Reading Agoncillo

From page H4

As if in reply to accusations that he has been unfair or biased in his writing, Agoncillo writes at the end of his essay, "Historical Interpretation":

"It is therefore presumptuous of a person to call another wrong simply because the latter's interpretation differs from his interpretation. It is well for us to accept the fact that interpretation varies from person to person and from time to time. Acceptance of this simple fact is a proof of tolerance."

The rest of the essays in this section show Agoncillo's analysis of historical sources (literature and oral history) and their importance in history. Interesting is "Literature As History" where he writes that "any literary piece to be enjoyed and appreciated should be approached with an eye to its historical milieu." He cites the "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo" which cannot be appreciated without knowing how and why Rizal wrote it.

Philippine literature is tackled in the second part with essays on its history and development. There is only one study on the poet Jose Corazon de Jesus and his writings, but this does not detract from the fact that Agoncillo is an expert on literature. His histories of colonial to present-day literature (updated by Churchill) reveal a familiarity with the oral traditions and written works of our forefathers to the modern trends of his time.

The language essays (the only section titled in Filipino) avers to Agoncillo's concern for our own language. In "The Development of the Philippine National Language," he traces how Philippine society created a national language that is still fraught with confusion and regionalism. The next two works (both written in Tagalog) show his genuine concern for our language in relation to national development. This includes translating foreign works to widen the Filipino's horizon.

Entertaining

As part of history, the Agoncillo biographies in "Filipinos in Profile" are not only pieces of excellent research but of entertaining reading as well. His subjects come alive because of anecdotes. Thus, we read of Generals Gregorio del Pilar and Isidoro Torres fighting over the command of soldiers on military parade; of Agoncillo himself and friends jokingly calling after UP president Rafael Palma (Paaeeeng!) in front of administration officials to the amusement of the old man; of Quezon dismissing a court judge not over the latter's adulteries but because he lied about them; and, of Epifanio de los Santos being a *borrachero* (heavy drinker).

In Agoncillo's eyes, heroes are not just people to be idolized by future generations. They are first and foremost, human beings with faults.

The contents of "Philippine History" are works for which Agoncillo has gained fame. His historical writings are stories written with facts. There is only one literary investigation here ("The Black Enigma of La Loba Negra") where Agoncillo shows his mettle in research and detective work in proving that the alleged Burgos novel was, in fact, a forgery.

His cultural studies ("Manila in the 1890s," "The Decline and Fall of Spanish Manila," "Filipino Responses to American Political and Cultural Institutions") are portraits of life during the two eras. The incidents in "Ang Huling Tagubilin" and "Bataan and Corregidor Revisited" are made with the art of the storyteller and the craft of the historian, with a keen and analytical mind.

"The Background of the Martial Law Regime in the Philippines" was probably one of the first historical essays written of the years prior to martial law. Churchill writes that Agoncillo "prudently avoided writing about the Marcos regime." The man, himself, gives the reason in an interview with historian (now National Historical Institute chair Ambeth Ocampo), in the early '80s, "I will not write in it (the martial law years) because we are too near the time. There must be a perspective. Besides, the documents are not available yet. We have to give everybody a chance. That is the essence of impartiality."

He gave a time frame of 20 years before an impartial history of the martial law era could be written. But Agoncillo would never have the chance of writing it, dying in 1986, a month shy of the People Power Revolution and a full 10 years before a martial law history, at least to his belief, could be written.

It is fortunate that the UST Publishing House made this book part of its roster for the Pontifical University's 400th anniversary celebration. It is a perfect companion to another work on Agoncillo from the same publisher (Antonio C. Hila's "The Historicism of Teodoro Agoncillo," 2001).

"History and Culture, Language and Literature" is a must-read for historians and students of history. It is also perfect for the reader who would want to learn not only about Agoncillo but of our history and culture as well.

"History and Culture, Languages and Literature: Selected Essays of Teodoro Agoncillo" is available at Solidaridad Bookstore and UST Bookstore. Call 7313522 or 7313101 loc. 8252 or 8278.

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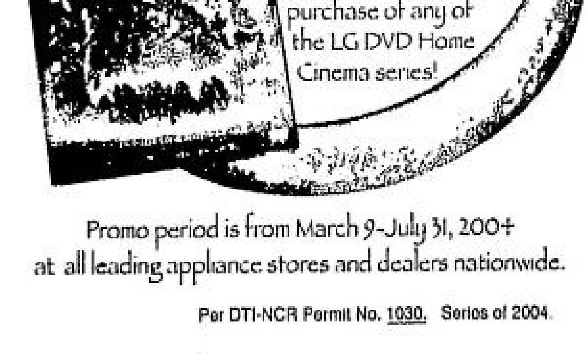

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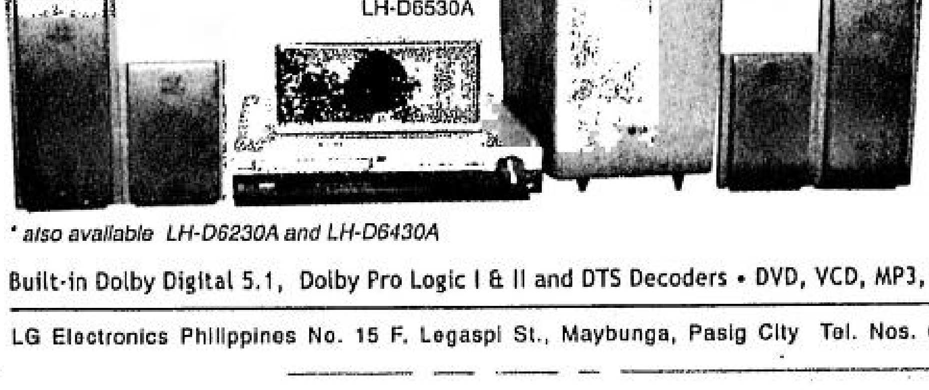

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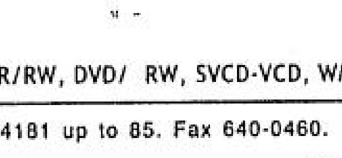

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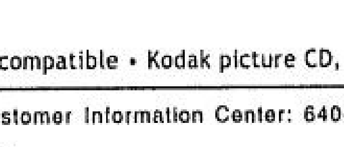

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April 4, 17 & 25
Starmodel Quest 2004
4pm, 3rd Level Foodstrip

April 11
Easter Egg Hunt "Carnival Show"
4pm, 3rd Level Foodstrip

April 14
Art-Is-Kool with KUYA ROBERT
1pm, 3rd Level Trade Hall

April 15
NINA and TRUE FAITH Live in Concert
7pm, 2nd Level Trade Hall

April 17
Automadness: "Everything About Cars"
Discounts • Car Show • Accessories
Detailing • LTO Off-site
Starmall Annex

April 18
Star FM Mall Tour
3pm, 3rd Level Foodstrip

April 19 - May 31
Star Summer Workshop
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Voice • Ballroom Dancing • Modern Dancing
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Fridays and Saturdays
Acoustic Nightlife

Wednesdays & Fridays
Acoustic Nights
At The Bridge

METROPOLIS
ALABANG - VIADUCT star

April 11
Easter Egg Hunt
4pm, 4th Level Trade Hall

April 16
Muntinlupa Job Fair
8am, 4th Level Trade Hall

April 17
ROSELLE NAVA Album Tour
4pm, 4th Level Trade Hall

starmall
LAS PIÑAS

April 11
Easter Egg Hunt Parade
Clown Magician Show

April 17
Voices of Summer - DESSA Concert
with THE COMPANY & 8OM

April 27
Hawaiian Festival

April 30
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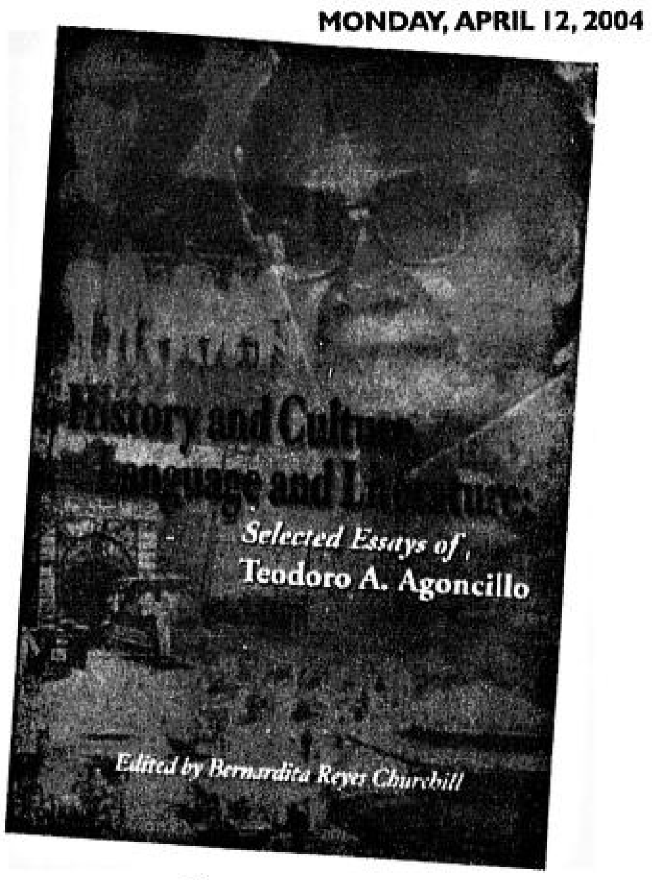

History and Culture, Language and Literature:
Selected Essays of, Teodoro A. Agoncillo
Edited by Bernardita Reyes Churchill

Reading Agoncillo

A book which collects the historian's essays shows his mettle as a culture critic, language expert, and literary scholar

"History and Culture. Languages and Literature. Selected Essays of Teodoro A. Agoncillo"
Edited by Bernardita Reyes-Churchill
UST Publishing House, 2003, 425 pages

By Jose Victor Z. Torres
Contributor

THIS began as a bulky manuscript which, in galley proofs, numbered 600 or more pages. Each of the essays is every bit as interesting as only Teodoro Agoncillo could write it.

Then, as the editor, Bernardita Reyes Churchill "did away with portions that distract from historical narrative and ... some paragraphs for easier reading," the result was this collection of 25 essays.

And it is still as interesting as only Teodoro Agoncillo could write it.

Agoncillo needs no introduction. His "History of the Filipino People" is a classic textbook for high school and college students. Unlike the history of his predecessors, where the poor student had to suffer the torture of memorizing the who, where, when and how, Agoncillo told the narrative of a nation.

But few students today know that, aside from history, Agoncillo was an authority on literature and languages. His essays on these subjects reveal the importance of our written and spoken word and making it part of the international setting.

This is not the first time that Agoncillo's writings have been compiled and published. This book however, shows his versatility as a writer, poet, historian and columnist. Agoncillo himself compiled some of his Tagalog essays in the 1940s but the collection was published only in 1998.

The present work focuses on Agoncillo the historian and the language and literary scholar. These essays have been published in journals and magazines long out of print. It is a boon for today's generation that these have been made available again in this collection.

Present-day historians and students might question the wisdom of publishing another Agoncillo compilation. New methodologies and views have contributed to the growth of Philippine historical studies. One could consider his works dated.

But Agoncillo obsolete? Think again.

As Churchill says in her preface, "his articles were very informative and rich in local color, for he was a keen observer of his time and was meticulous in recording the historical events that transpired during his lifetime. Some of his essays also reflect on the social mores and values of his time that are already lost to some of today's younger generation."

Agoncillo lived through the years when the libraries and archives were still untouched by the ravages of World War II. He also met, talked to and worked with personalities students today call heroes and only read about in books.

Anecdotal

Thus, his histories, studies and biographies are laced with anecdotes, not only his but by the people he interviewed. It is in this simple form of writing that the person, place and event come alive to the reader.

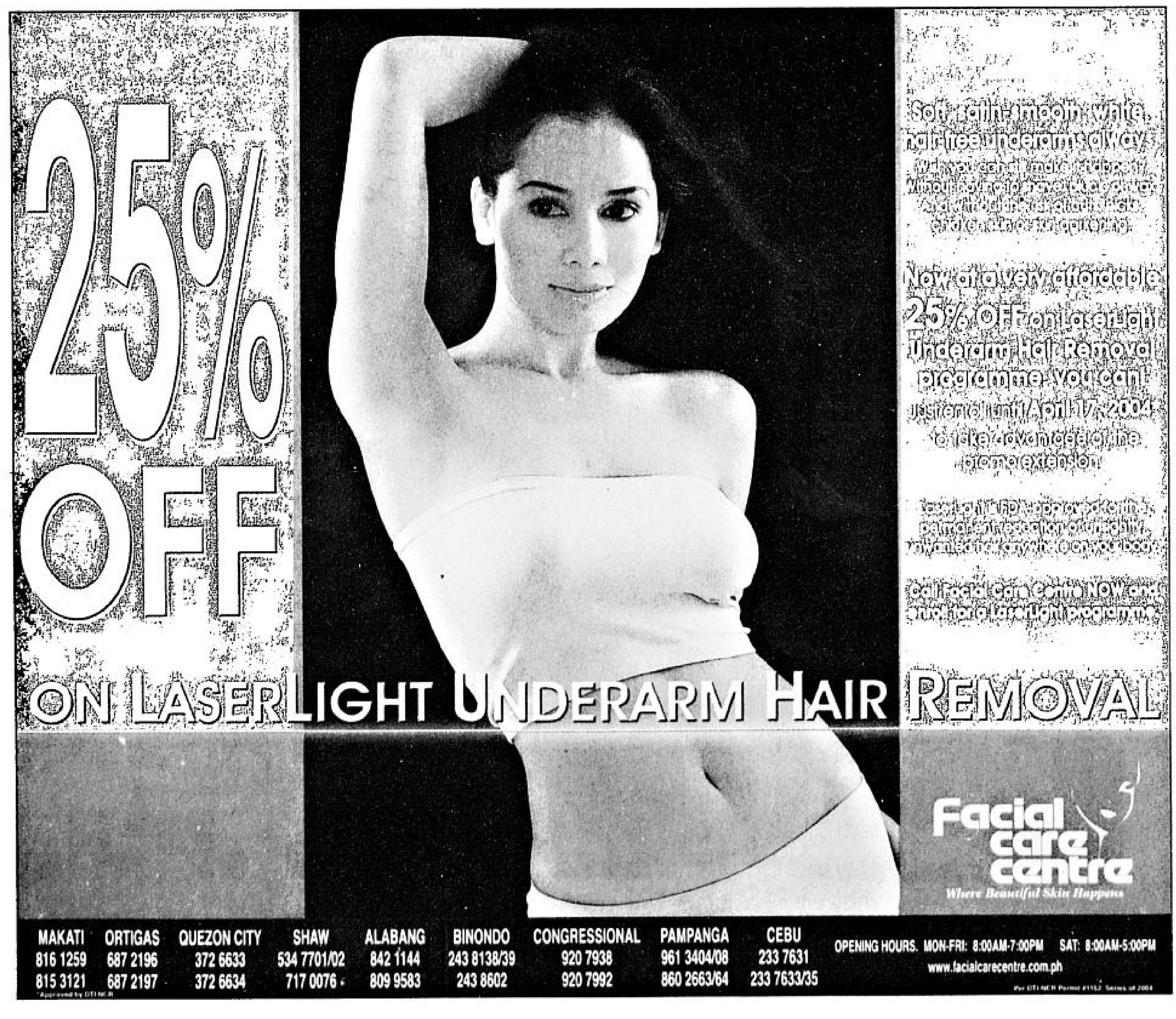
The essays are divided into five sections: "The Practice of History," "Philippine Literature," "Ang Wikang Pambansa," "Filipinos in Profile" and "Philippine History."

Agoncillo's lessons in the writing of Philippine history and its importance in our culture and identity is discussed in the first. The section is introduced with a history of Philippine historical writing and its proponents ("Philippine Historiography in the Age of Kalaw"). Churchill did right in placing this essay first as we are given insights on how Filipinos began writing their own history.

The succeeding essays show Agoncillo's mettle in historical writing. Influenced by modern European historians and philosophers, he sets out to teach history not merely by listing personalities, dates, and events (which he calls "chronicle-writing") but setting these things to life.

For Agoncillo, there is no objectivity in historical writing. This is why there are differences in interpretations and opinions. What he reiterates is impartiality ("To be impartial is to be fair.") The historian is expected to look at both sides of the coin, then draw his impartial, but not unfair, conclusion.

READING/ G3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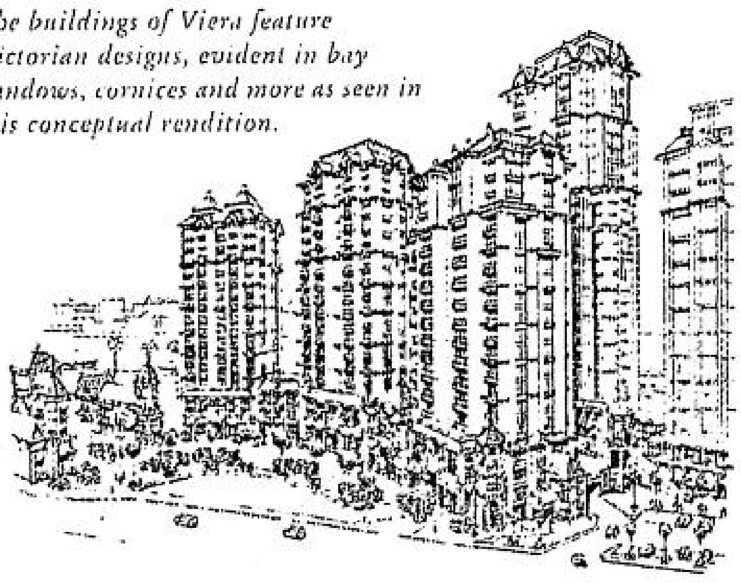
PROPERTY PREVIEWS

VIERA: THE LATEST EXPRESSION OF SAN FRANCISCO LIVING AT BRITTANY BAY

Brittany Corporation, the property development maverick specializing in uniquely themed properties, launches its first foray into condominiums with Viera at Brittany Bay in Sucat.

The latest addition to Brittany Bay, Viera is the residential-commercial lifescape that will soon rise to present a number of novel features in condominium design.

Most notable is its setting. Viera is situated in the community of Brittany Bay. Unlike other condominiums wherein one may seem to be living in isolation without neighboring friends, Viera affords you the benefit of fellowship with people in the neighborhood as it is surrounded by La Posada, Victorianne Row and soon, the Presidio in Brittany Bay.



The buildings of Viera feature Victorian designs, evident in bay windows, cornices and more as seen in this conceptual rendition.

You have the privacy as you'd expect in a condominium, but with Viera, a few steps away and you have a setting that is made for neighborly interaction. You have the opportunity to be part of community activities, to make friends, to be on a first name basis with the people around you.

And the whole community is uniquely themed as it is with all Brittany Corporation properties. For Viera and Brittany Bay, that theme is inspired by a famous Victorian community half a world away. That place: San Francisco in California. This is seen in the architectural design details, the way the buildings are laid out within proximity of each other, the way the greenery and man-made structures interweave with each other harmoniously. To date, the adoption of the SFO theme—from the broad strokes of architectural and environmental design down to the minute details such as the types of foliage planted or the shades of shingles used—is a characteristic that's uniquely Brittany.

From the outside, you'll immediately see Victorian architectural features come together to emulate the distinguishing design of San Francisco's charming neighborhoods.

The structures will feature elegant facades, soft pastel shades, flat canopies, bay windows and distinctive roof shingles.

Another noticeable feature is the combination of various heights among the condominiums. Initially, five condominiums will rise to turn Viera into reality. Viera's buildings are designed to produce a skyline of variable heights, a pleasant break from the monotony of flat, even horizons.

Moving closer, at ground level, multiple entry points, both for vehicular and pedestrian traffic are

Continued on page 2

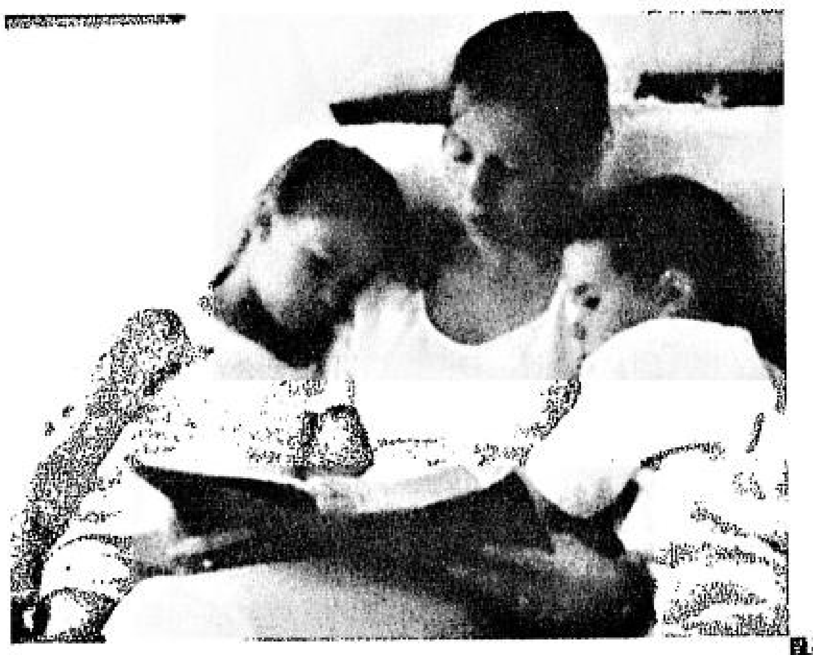
Designed to appeal to your three major senses.

Your sense of privacy.

Your sense of style.

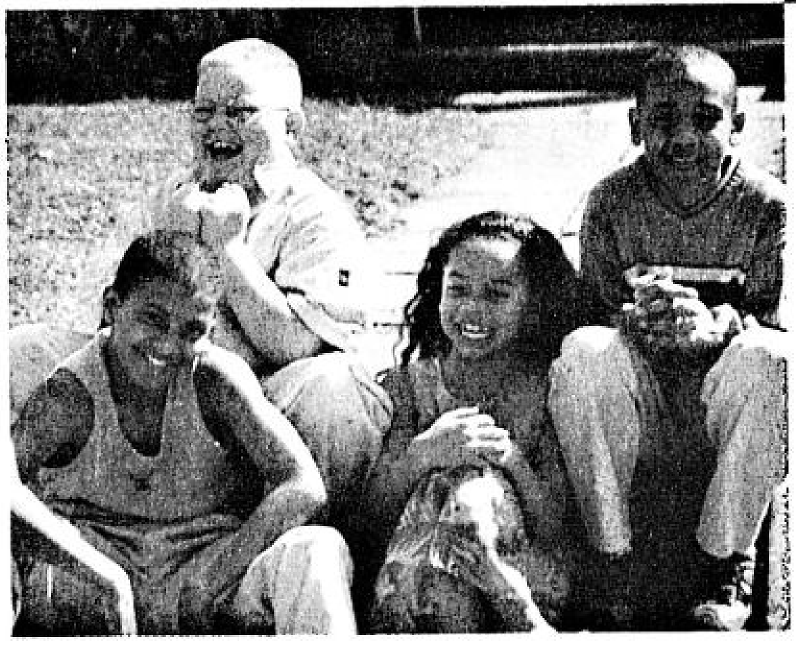
Your sense of community.

From the moment we conceptualized Viera, we made it a point to appeal to your most vital senses.



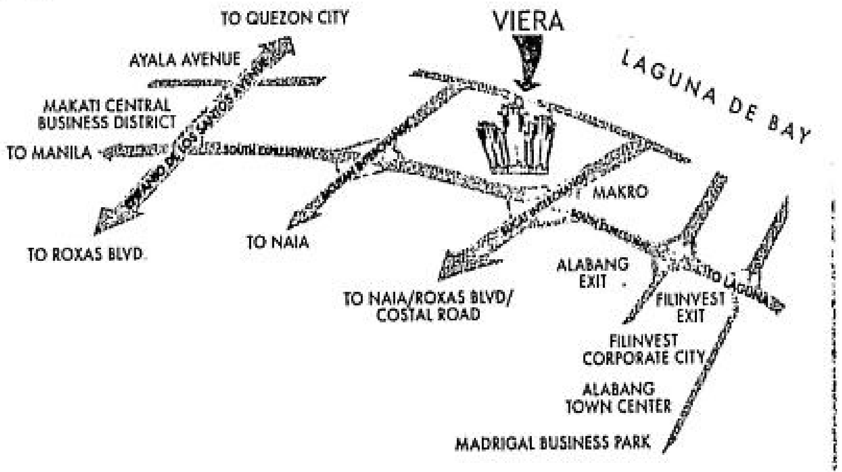
For your sense of privacy, condominium units are generously spaced with an average of six units per floor.

For your sense of style, Viera takes inspiration from Victorian architecture.



For your sense of community, Viera is set in the middle of the Brittany Bay neighborhood.

Viera. Appeals to your senses by design. Only by Brittany Corporation.



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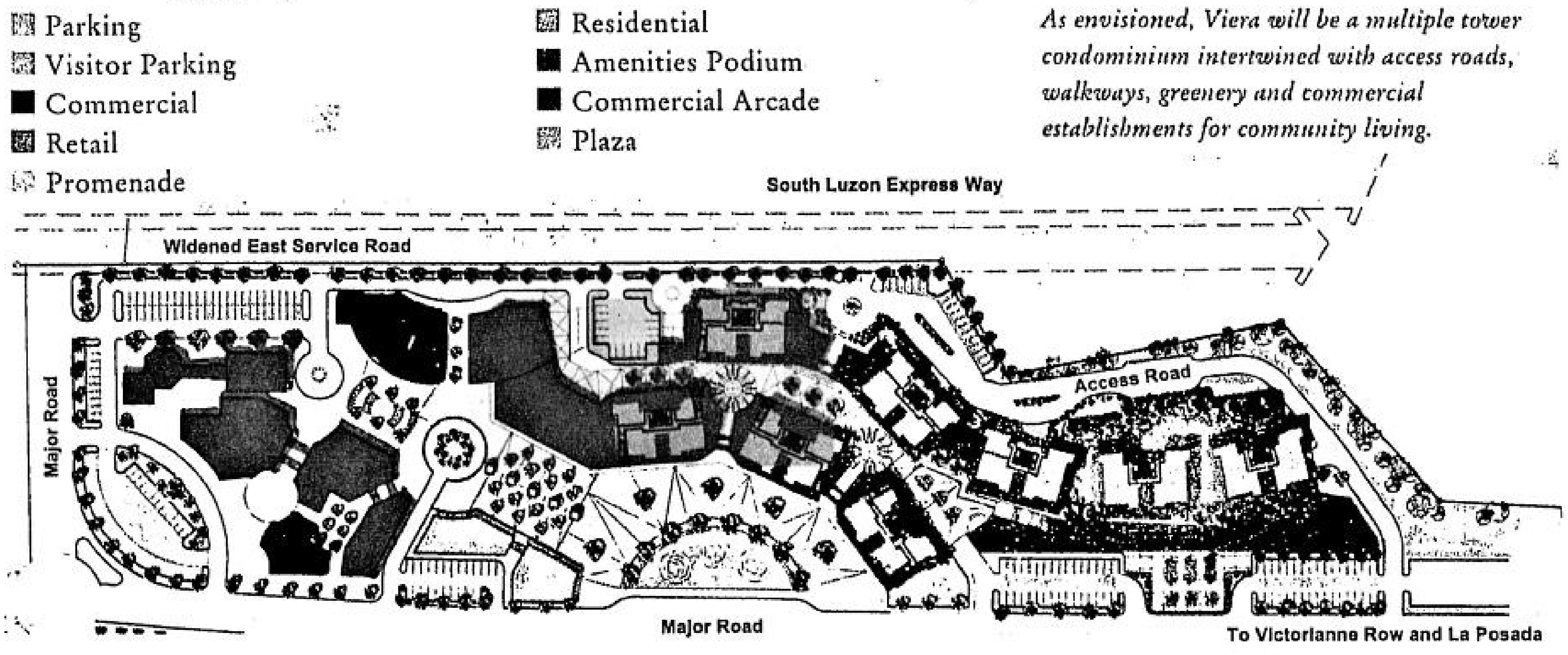
VIERA
AT BRITTANY BAY

From page 1

clearly visible. This makes for easy access to and from Viera. Paths are accented with greenery, providing for shade and a refreshing look, weaving its way around and throughout the five buildings.

As you walk around the ground level, you have a choice of cafes and restaurants. It's a pleasant place for a coffee and croissant for breakfast in the cool morning air right downstairs. Or a long leisurely lunch with friends at a corner bistro. Or a romantic candlelight dinner for two in a nearby restaurant. Everything is a short walk away through the ground floor pathways or the elevated walkways connecting all the buildings.



As envisioned, Viera will be a multiple tower condominium intertwined with access roads, walkways, greenery and commercial establishments for community living.

VICTORIAN SAN FRANCISCO INSPIRES URBAN RENEWAL AT BRITTANY BAY

At nearby Sucat, along the South Luzon Expressway, an expanse of land is quickly developing into a vibrant lifescape, representing the next evolutionary phase in property development.

A major part of Brittany Bay's urban renewal, the adoption of the San Francisco theme encompasses not just individual homes but the entire property.

This is Brittany Bay.

Developed according to the Brittany Corporation philosophy of creating uniquely themed properties, Brittany Bay is also becoming the concrete expression of urban renewal.

As defined by Brittany Corporation, urban renewal means creating an idyllic setting where lifestyles are enhanced, brought to an even better, higher quality—where life is re-invigorated, renewed.

For Brittany Bay, the inspiration for the urban renewal of the entire lifescape is sparked by one of the world's greatest cities: San Francisco and its Victorian character.

Driving up to the entrance of Brittany Bay, the affinity for San Francisco is evident. The location is right beside picturesque Laguna de Bay. In the same way, the city of San Francisco is situated alongside the San Francisco Bay.

The similarities simply begin there. Immediately at the entrance of Brittany Bay, a row of commercial establishments, to be completed by mid-2004, provide a glimpse of Victorian design as done in San Francisco.

Soon, upon completion, restaurants, cafes, and bars suggest a nightlife as alive and vibrant as any SFO club neighborhood. Immediately interspersed with the commercial establishments is Viera, one of two Victorian-inspired condominium developments at Brittany Bay. Viera and the commercial establishments intertwine with each other along with lush greenery along the walkways, and around the condominiums. This makes it seem as if the structures blend in with the environment across 50 hectares.

Going farther down the main road and to the left, a brick-accented road and rotunda guide you through to the single-detached homes of La Posada.

Ideal for raising a family, the homes at La Posada are planned with Victorian design details, angled bay windows, squared rooflines, elegant cornices and more. Living areas are space-planned for the family, with room to grow.

Alongside La Posada, a row of duettos and quadrilles, Brittany's version of double and quadruple housing units, pose a striking resemblance to San Francisco's famed "postcard row". Appropriately, this development is named Victorianne Row.

From looks alone, Victorianne Row transports you to a San Francisco neighborhood every time you come home.

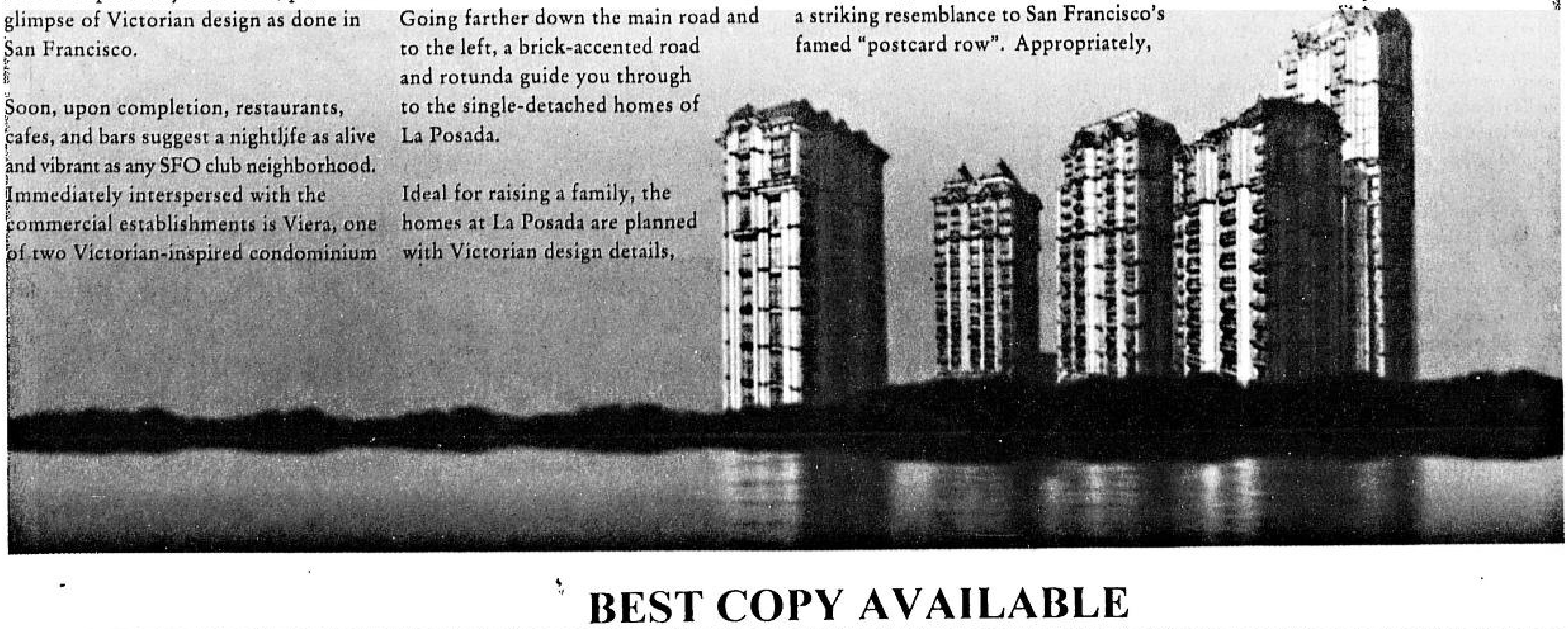
The homes of La Posada and Victorianne Row blend in with the condominiums of Viera and Presidio.

In effect, Brittany Bay is fast growing into a self-contained city, a true lifescape where you are afforded a multitude of choices for your lifestyle; where you have access to establishments you need to enhance the quality of life; where you can live just as you would in San Francisco.

A neighborhood of neighborhoods

Think of Brittany Bay as a number of neighborhoods collected into one large neighborhood integrated by a theme.

Each neighborhood has its own distinct personality even as the San Francisco Victorian character ties them all together.



From page 1

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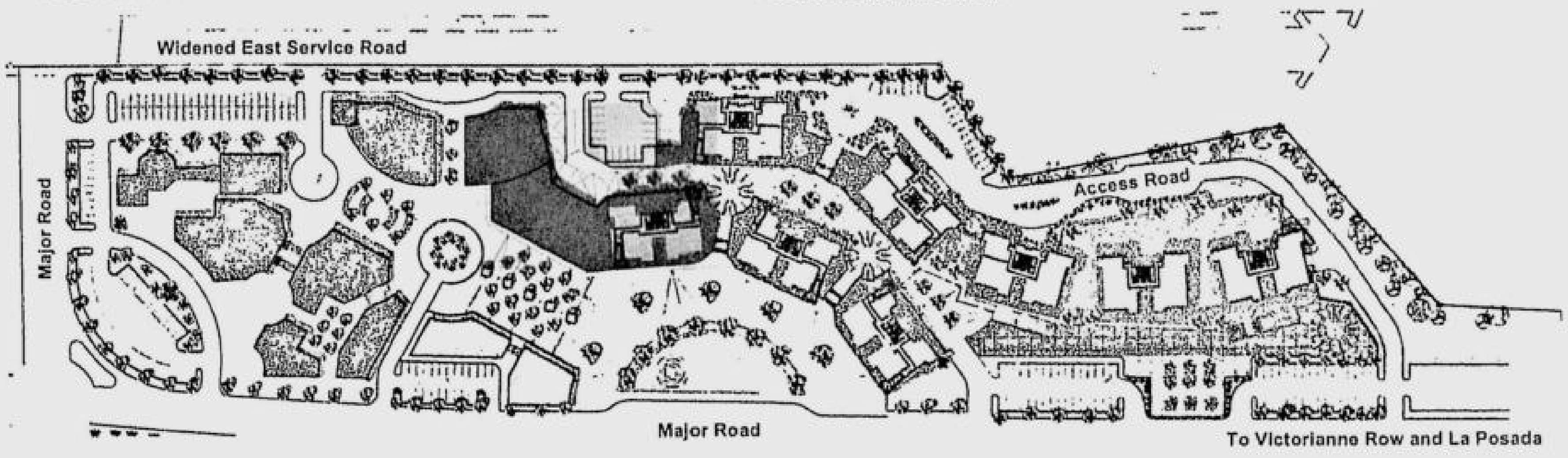

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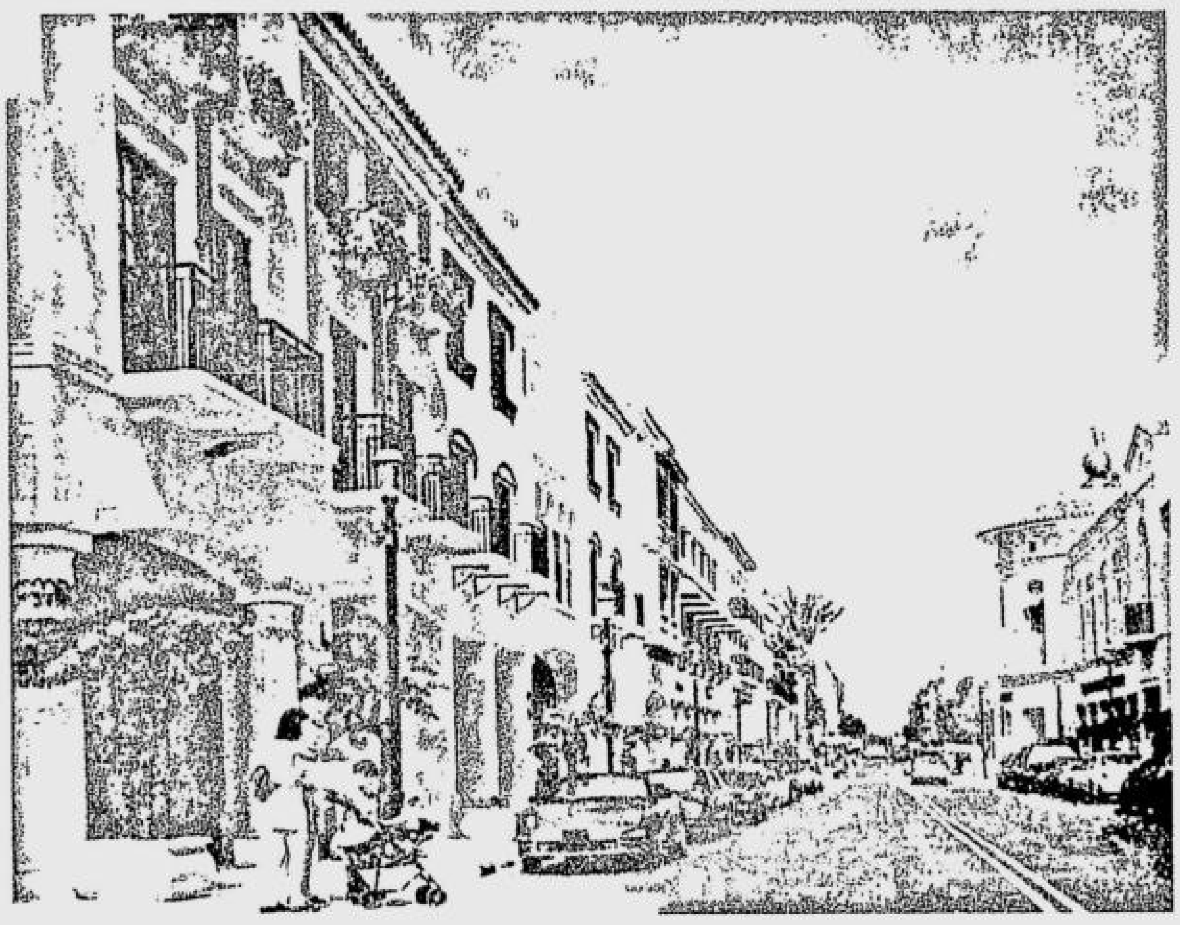

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From looks alone, Victorianne Row transports you to a San Francisco neighborhood every time you come home.

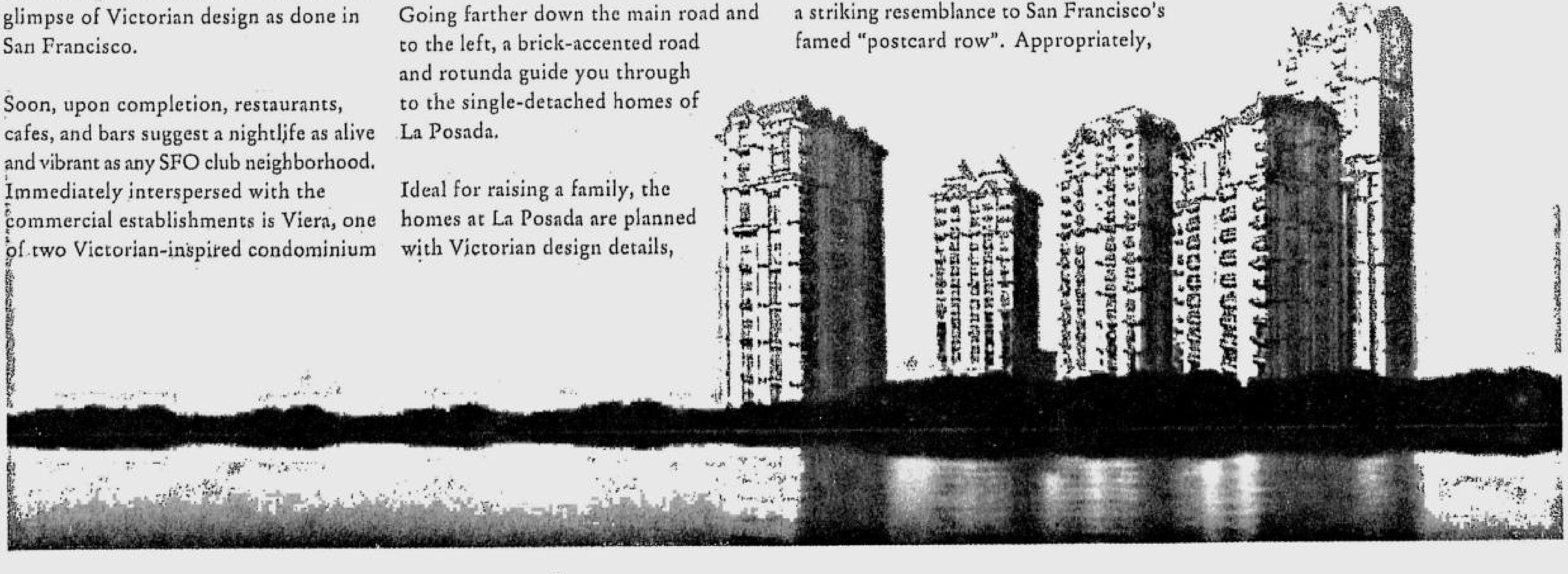
The homes of La Posada and Victorianne Row blend in with the condominiums of Viera and Presidio.

In effect, Brittany Bay is fast growing into a self-contained city, a true lifescape where you are afforded a multitude of choices for your lifestyle; where you have access to establishments you need to enhance the quality of life; where you can live just as you would in San Francisco.

A neighborhood of neighborhoods

Think of Brittany Bay as a number of neighborhoods collected into one large neighborhood integrated by a theme.

Each neighborhood has its own distinct personality even as the San Francisco Victorian character ties them all together.



Moving up, above the commercial establishments, the individual condominium units afford the luxury of space. Unlike most condominiums which seem to be bursting with a crowd of tenants, each floor of Viera accommodates an average of six units. This means each building will have only a maximum of 100 to 120 tenants. This also makes for a more comfortable environment, like having a small cozy neighborhood with every floor.

The units are a choice of 1-bedroom (36 sq. m.), 2-bedroom (54 sq. m.) and 3-bedroom (72 and 108 sq. m.) units.

Whether you're a bachelor looking for your own space or a small family who needs a home that's close to everything, Viera offers the kind of unit you need. Strolling inside the units, efficient space greets you.

Typically, the units provide a living area that's more generous compared to the usual condominium unit.

> *The theme is inspired by a famous Victorian community half a world away. That place: San Francisco in California.*

Moreover, balconies accessible from the bedrooms provide a look out point for gazing at the bay or for waking up to golden sunrises.

By keeping faithful to the spirit of San Francisco, Viera creates the ideal setting for condominium life that's convenient, in a location where everything you need is just a short leisurely walk away. Better still, it's condominium life that affords you the benefits of fellowship—with condominium co-tenants, with people in the commercial establishments and neighbors in the entire Brittany Bay community.

VIERA
AT BRITTANY BAY

Each neighborhood has its own distinct personality even as the San Francisco Victorian character ties them all together.

La Posada:
when you're moving up in life

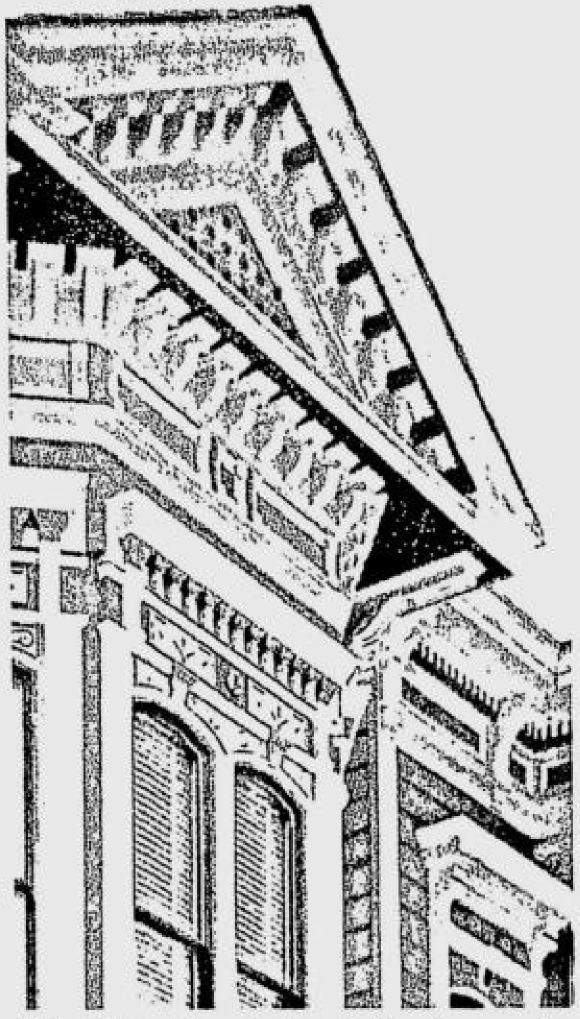
The single-detached homes of La Posada are ideal for raising a family or those empty-nesters who want a place closer to everything.

The look of the luxury residences at La Posada take from Victorian homes with light pastel colors, large bay windows, simple yet elegant facades. Inside, living areas are meticulously space-planned, allowing for family activity.

The single-detached home of La Posada: a Victorian home with room to grow.

Victorianne Row:
a picture perfect home

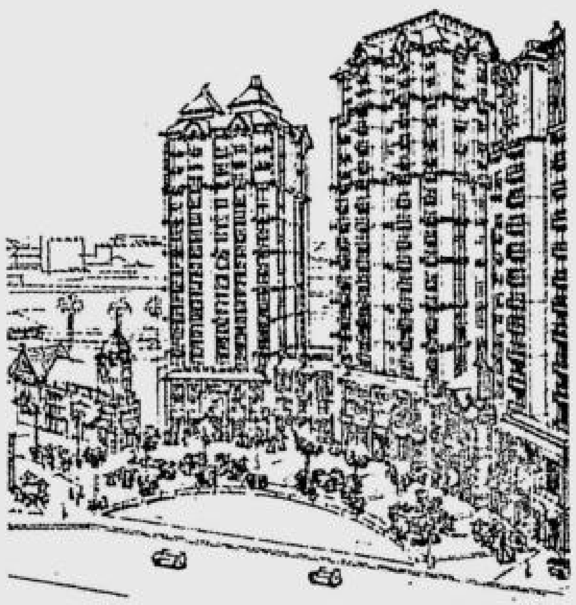
While looking at Victorianne Row, you just might find yourself glancing over at the bay in search of the Golden Gate. A queue of homes, sit side by side in Victorian fashion, similar to the row houses in San Francisco, including the famed Alamo Square. It's a picturesque neighborhood for a picture perfect life.



The Victorian design is clearly seen in the architectural details as in the elegantly shaped roof.

Viera:
residential condominiums with a sense of community

Brittany's first condominium development, Viera offers condominium life in a community setting as it is situated near the Brittany Bay developments. And at the lower level, commercial establishments are available for your dining and entertainment needs. Buildings are intertwined with pathways, greenery and shops so all you need to do is simply walk around to avail of whatever it is you want.



Viera, the mid-rise condominium, combines commercial and residential areas into an integrated development.

Presidio:
life by the bay

Presidio is the development that will soon rise closest to Laguna de Bay, an idyllic location for enjoying the bayside life.

Brittany Bay is guided by Brittany Corporation's steadfast vision for uniquely-themed properties and meticulous eye for detail. It is executed by a pool of top-tier architectural firms, local talents steeped in global experience.

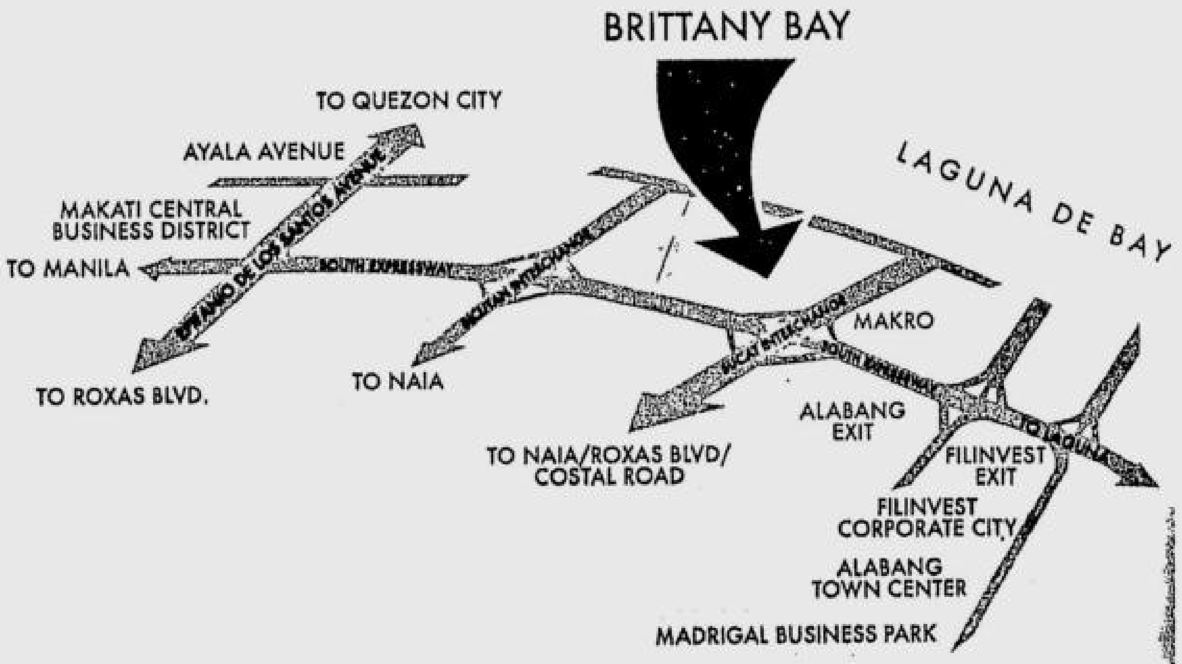
Palafox & Associates lent their expertise in masterplanning Brittany Bay into a multi-dimensional community. RMDA took on the task of creating the multiple tower residential-commercial condominium Viera, along with the intertwining cafes and restaurants. Recio + Casas crafted Presidio, crafting it into a bayside haven. Architectural Network took a skilled hand at designing the San Franciscan Victorianne Row. As the steering visionary, Brittany Corporation channels the creative energies of these world class architectural firms to transform the landscape in Sucat into a singularly master-designed lifescape.

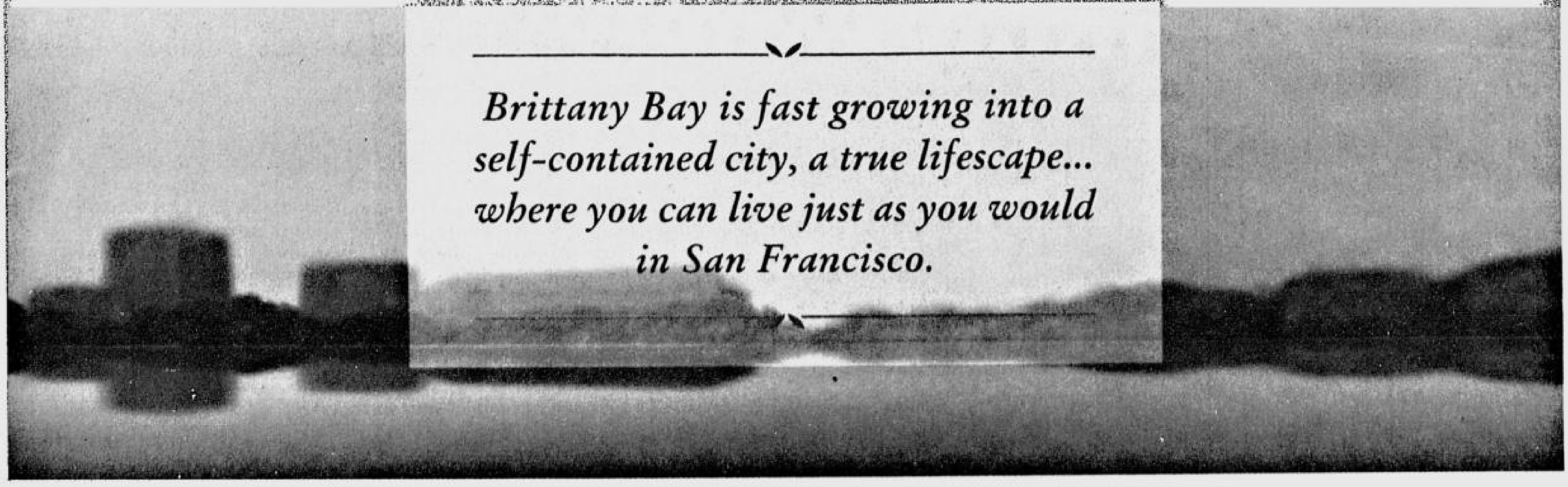
Stretching across the 50 hectares of bayside land, Brittany Bay puts together a colorful range of neighborhoods, from side-by-side homes, to growing mid-rises.

All, however, share a common trait: the Victorian character of San Francisco as translated only by Brittany Corporation.

For a Property Preview:
Call 850 2868, 850 6986 or 850 3084
or email us at mktg@brittany.com.ph.
You can also visit our website:
www.brittany.com.ph for additional information.

Brittany Bay
A development of Brittany Corporation





Brittany Bay is fast growing into a self-contained city, a true lifescape... where you can live just as you would in San Francisco.

A LIFE OF LEISURE AWAITS AT BRITTANY BAY

Coffee at your favorite corner cafe overlooking the bay. A nice long lunch with your family at a neighboring restaurant. An evening of live music with friends.

Sounds like a day in the mall? Actually, at Brittany Bay, it's just another day in the neighborhood.

From the entrance, a line of restaurants and coffee shops, housed in Victorian-San Franciscan architecture provide a warm welcome. This row of establishments will be open for business by mid-2004.

Soon, as the entire property develops, you'll see a short distance away from the Brittany Bay entrance, the rest of the commercial areas intermingle with the residential areas. This is particularly obvious with Viera, the mid-rise condominium near the Brittany Bay entrance. In fact, the first two floors of Viera are dedicated to cafes, restaurants and bars. For Viera residents, it's just a short elevator ride downstairs.

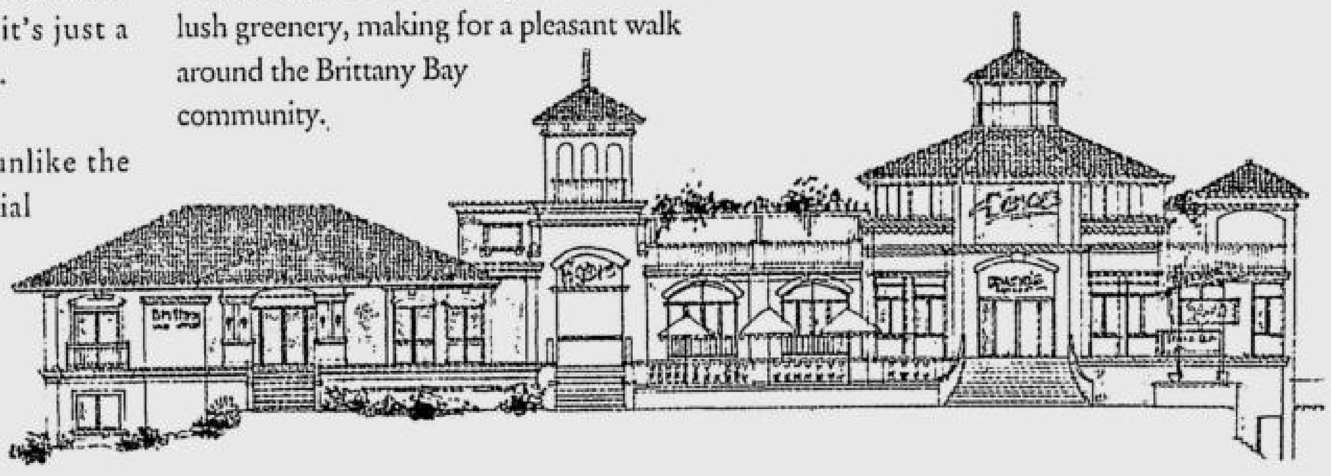
The layout at Brittany Bay is unlike the common residential-commercial developments wherein zones are assigned to specific uses. Brittany Bay's layout strategically puts the commercial areas in close proximity with the residential areas. This makes it easy for residents and visitors to go around and enjoy the establishments.

Additionally, brick pathways are lined with lush greenery, making for a pleasant walk around the Brittany Bay community.

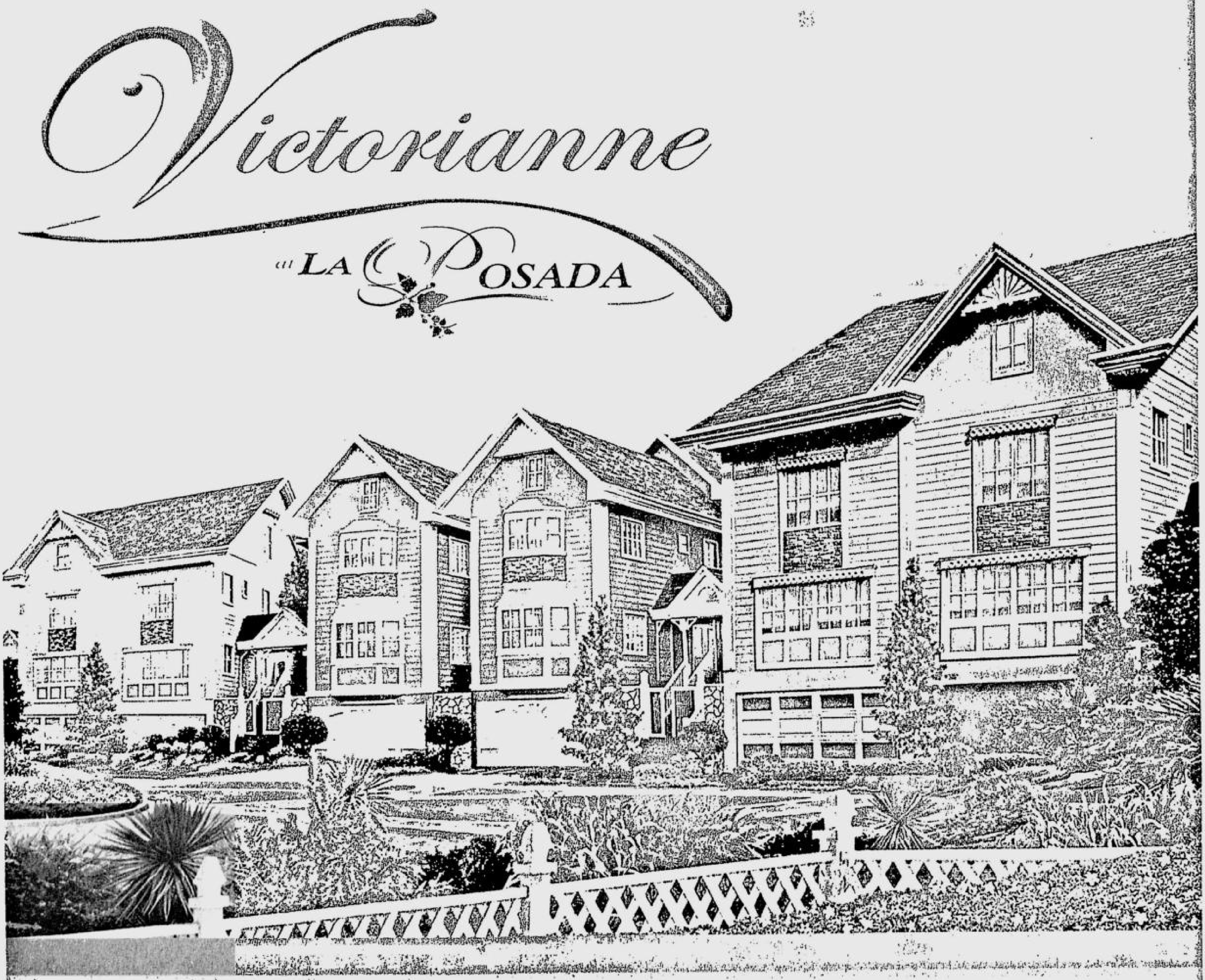
Effectively, the plant life eliminates the harsh environment of a concrete jungle as found in ordinary commercial areas.

And for those rare instances when you do have to drive to the commercial area, multiple entry and exit points facilitate your short trips.

All this means you need not go far to enjoy a full leisurely day.. It's all right there in the community of Brittany Bay.



The commercial area is an eclectic combination of intimate cafes, friendly bars, restaurants and shops.



First Taste of Success

Welcome to the fold of the distinguished class. Victorianne at La Posada in Brittany Bay graciously opens its doors to families and individuals whose success is now being fulfilled. These cozy, stylish nests, just 15 minutes from Makati and 10 minutes from Alabang, mark the beginning of fine living, romantically portrayed in Neo-Victorian rows of Duplexes and Quadrilles. Your new home now waits for you.

For bigger families, you can also choose from our individual homes at La Posada.

Want to know more? Call: 850 2868/850 6986 • www.brittany.com.ph

Getting there is easy: Take the Sucat Exit of South Luzon Expressway. From the Sucat Interchange, take the East Service Road and it's only 50 meters from there. Just look for the Brittany Bay billboard.

Brittany
CORPORATION

The New ABC

Iba tayo

In October, 2003 the Associated Broadcasting Company changed hands. The new owners and management now tell us what the New ABC is all about.

Kumusta ho ba sa atin?

by Antonio O. Cojuangco President & Chief Executive Officer

> ....there is no place like home, and home is the Philippines. But living at home is difficult, the problems of the country complex and myriad....We each have roles in playing out this puzzle. I have chosen to focus on media.

"Sir! Okay na ho ba kayo? Kumusta ho ba sa atin?"

The voice roused me from my stupor, my lungs drenched with the anesthetic pumped into me for a procedure done on my throat. I vaguely remember having checked into Stanford Medical Center with the recovery room being a veritable Manila. The nurses, mostly Filipinos, worked quickly and efficiently. And they longed for home.

The stories of Filipinos doing well in foreign lands are endless. Businessmen, lawyers, doctors, nurses, seamen, domestic helpers – the one consistent positive in the Philippine economic balance sheet remains to be the remittance of overseas workers into the Philippines. One had to make one's future outside the country. And as if on cue, Mr. Elmer Reyes Jacinto, a Basilan native who topped this year's medical board exams, announces that he is pursuing his quest of a nursing career in the U. S.

But while some have gone abroad to better their lot and have been hailed as today's economic heroes, many, in spite of or because of the struggles of Philippine daily existence, have remained at home. Among these are the balikbayans who, having made their pile, have opted to return and retire in their home country. Indeed there is no place like home, and home is the Philippines. But living at home is difficult, the problems of the country complex and myriad. They range from an exploding population rate without the accompanying growth in economic production to the degradation of one's inner values. No new jobs, no job security, a deteriorating peace and order, a ballooning fiscal deficit, the high cost of medical products and services, a drop in the literacy rate - a task too daunting for one person to solve; and yet we can never give up. We each have roles in playing out this puzzle. I have chosen to focus on media.

One of the basic assumptions I cling to is that the Filipino is not dumb. Many Filipinos lack a clear understanding of what is truly happening in the country. Given all the facts, the Filipino, whether belonging to class A, B, C, D or E, will make the right choice. One of media's responsibility is enlightening its audience on the truth behind the news. The disqualification of Mr. Eddie Gil in the 2004 presidential election by the Comelec is a testament to media's responsible reporting. "Lente" first exposed the obvious inadequacy of his qualifications in its election coverage series.

Secondly, media is an effective tool with which to shape and mold a country's ethical values. The problems of corruption, crime and violence stem not only from economic want but also from the lack of character formation at home and in the schools. As television commands the bulk of waking hours spent at home, its programming will have a great impact in shaping the Filipino moral fiber. The programming in today's leading networks have reduced shows to a level of debauchery and freakishness with its use of midgets, screaming faggots, bikini-clad ladies, and lately, mermaids. Peryang-perya ang dating. The absurd has become the norm. We even seem to take pride in our deficiencies as we laugh and say "only in the Philippines."

Lastly, one of the few remaining world-class skills the Filipino is known for is our artistry. The legendary Ms. Saigon cast of Filipino actors, culminating in Ms. Lea Salonga's Tony award, has put us on the radar screen of the performing arts. It is my intent to help keep our audience aware of the high level of performance of our talents preserving, as it were, one of the few remaining bastions of pride in our country.

We each have our favorite soul food, be it the breakfast tapsilog, the proverbial kare and adobo, and the soothing ginger taste of a chicken tinola broth served piping hot. We miss them now and again and we would like them served in the comfort of home. And for most of us, home is the Philippines. And survive it must.

AIMING HIGH

by Reggie D. Galura Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer

We will work harder and smarter and prove that we are better than our competitors – WE WILL BE NUMBER ONE.

Anxiety filled the air on the day the group of businessman Antonio O. Cojuangco assumed ownership and management of Associated Broadcasting Company. As Mr. Cojuangco introduced his new management team to the incumbent officers and managers of the network, we could feel a pervasive sense of uneasiness from the employees. We understood their discomfort. It was perhaps compounded by the uncertainty of their future under the new owners and management. Likewise, the new management was quite apprehensive and somewhat overwhelmed by the significance of the moment. This was a chance to take over the reins of a company that is rich in history and tradition. With this came the daunting challenge to bring the network to new heights and restore the glory it once had.

The first task that we chose to do was to reassure the network's employees that their jobs and their future were secure. We made it clear to them that the new owners wanted these employees, many of whom have been part of the organization from the beginning, to be part of ABC's rebuilding. We said that the new owners will make investments not only in equipment and infrastructure, but in our people as well. We want to rekindle our people's passion and get their commitment to meet the challenges facing us. We will build on their strengths and learn from their weaknesses. And so it was under these circumstances that the new owners were welcomed into the ABC organization. All eyes were on us, waiting to see what ABC and AOC (as we have since endearingly called Mr.Cojuangco) will do.

From the start, there were certain things that would define what we have set out to do. First, we knew that we will have to target the broadest market segment. Second, our product will need to be differentiated from the common fare presently being offered by the other networks. Third, our identity will be anchored on a strong and unbiased news and public affairs operations. Fourth, we will manage our costs and maximize the utilization of our resources. Finally, that we must have fun while doing all of these things.

It was not too difficult to identify the areas we needed to work on right away - building a top-notch organization, improving signal strength, broadening our provincial presence, upgrading equipment and facilities, overhauling our programming content, retraining and retooling our work force. All these would require an initial investment of over one billion pesos.

We set out to fill gaps in our organizational structure by hiring the best available people. We know that we need to hire highly qualified people. These people will complement our existing management team and serve as our guideposts to help us map out our overall strategic directions.

We are told that our broadcast signal is relatively weaker compared to the other networks. Since many viewers do not enjoy the luxury of cable television and rely primarily on rabbit antennas or rooftop aerials, we were quickly convinced that improving signal strength and broadcast coverage was to be our priority. Thus we have embarked on an ambitious program to not only upgrade our transmission facilities in Metro Manila but to strengthen and broaden our provincial presence as well. Once completed, we expect to be at par or better than our competitors.

Perhaps daunted by the big task that lies ahead, we initially positioned ourselves as a "strong third" in the industry. But, emboldened by the tremendous support and vision of the new owners, we have since dared to aim higher. No longer content with aspiring to be an also-run, we set our course to become THE industry leader.

So it is with this end in sight do we focus all our efforts. We will acquire all the latest state of the art equipment, hire all the best talents and introduce quality and innovative programs that will challenge the "sameness" of the other networks' offerings. We will set our vision beyond the horizon, keep our ears to the ground and deliver what our viewers and advertising clients desire. We will work harder and smarter and prove that we are better than our competitors - WE WILL BE NUMBER ONE.

YOU CAN COUNT ON IT

Board of Directors & Officers

ABC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

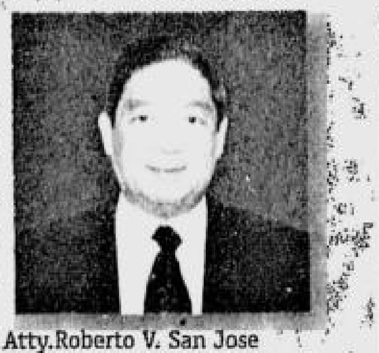
Jose T. Pardo, *Chairman*

Antonio O. Cojuangco
Director/President & CEO

Reggie D. Galura
Director/Exec. Vice President & COO

Raul B. de Mesa, *Director*

Cesar G. Reyes, *Director*



Atty.Roberto V. San Jose
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Ricardo D. Bautista, *Treasurer*

Atty. Florentino M. Herrera III
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B[illegible]ar[illegible] [illegible]f Directors & Officers

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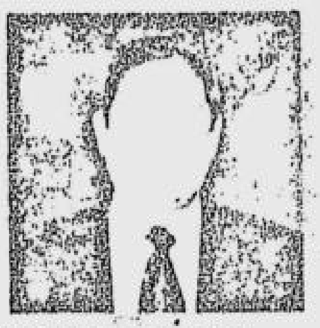

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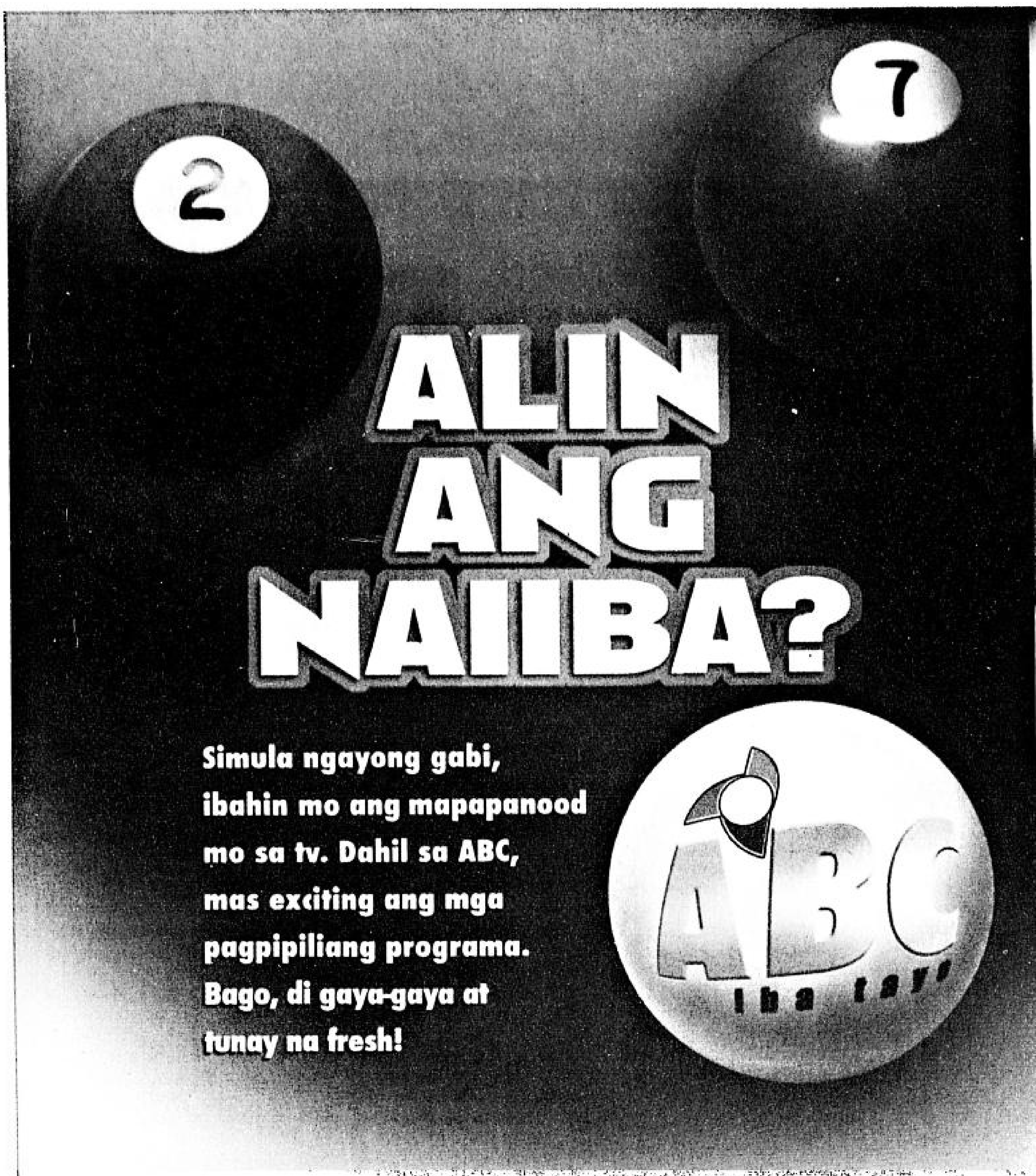
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7
ABC
iba tayo

ALIN ANG NAIIBA?

Simula ngayong gabi, ibahin mo ang mapapanood mo sa tv. Dahil sa ABC, mas exciting ang mga pagpipiliang programa. Bago, di gaya-gaya at tunay na fresh!

BUHAY BEAUTY QUEEN
The Search for Mutya ng Pilipinas 2004

Monday to Friday @ 9:30 pm

Ang kauna-unahang "beauty-serye"sa Pinoy television. Labin-tatlong linggo ng dokumentaryo sa paglikha ng isang Filipina Beauty Queen. With over 1.5 million pesos in prizes. Ito na ang pinakamalaking beauty pageant sa Pilipinas sa ngayon.

PERA O PUSO

Tuesdays @ 7:00 pm
Premieres April 20, 2004
Hosted by Willie Revillame, Patricia Javier & Maui Taylor

Reality tv meets game show. Up to P8 Million in prizes can be won!

SCENT OF LOVE

Monday to Friday @ 5:00 pm

One love, two lifetimes. Pag-iibigan sa buhay at kamatayan. Pag-iibigan na walang katapusan. Kung naniniwala ka sa reincarnation, ito ang love story para sa iyo.

FIREWORKS

Monday to Friday @ 10:45 pm

An adult story about people falling in love and the choices they have to make. An innocent woman torn between the two men in her life. When innocence and experience meet, when love and hate collide, you can expect . . .FIREWORKS!

GAME CHANNEL EXTREME

Monday to Friday @ 4:00 pm
Premieres April 26

Total interactive TV for today's teens. Real time TV games, chat, music, trivia and a lot more with super cool celebrity game jocks everyday!

AMAZING TWINS

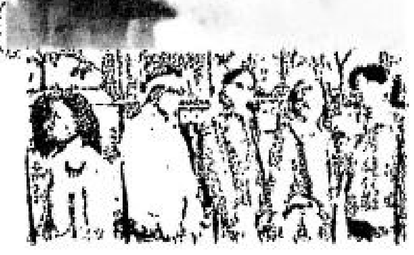
Monday to Friday @ 4:30 pm

Ano ang mga lihim ng legendary fighters ng Jiang River na sina Gary at Charlie? Sundan ang kanilang pakikipagsaparalaran mula simula hanggang sa huling kabanata sa "Amazing Twins".

SENTRO
Mga Kwento sa Gitna ng Balita

Monday to Friday @ 5:30 pm
Anchored by : ALI SOTTO at JOHN SUSI

Bagong tandem, bagong style, bagong pagbabalita na inyong kagigiliwan. Mas maaga, mas mabilis at mas mainit -- dahil di mo na kailangan pang maghintay ng 24 oras para malaman kung ano ang nasa puso ng mga balita!

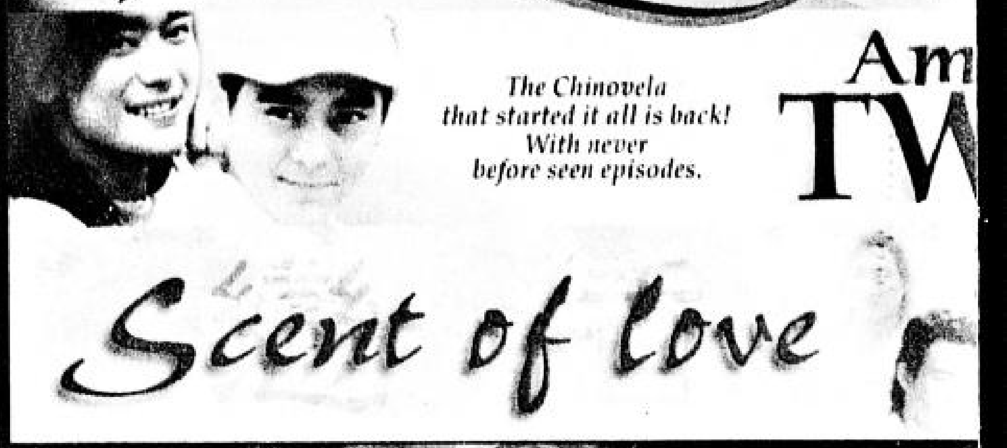


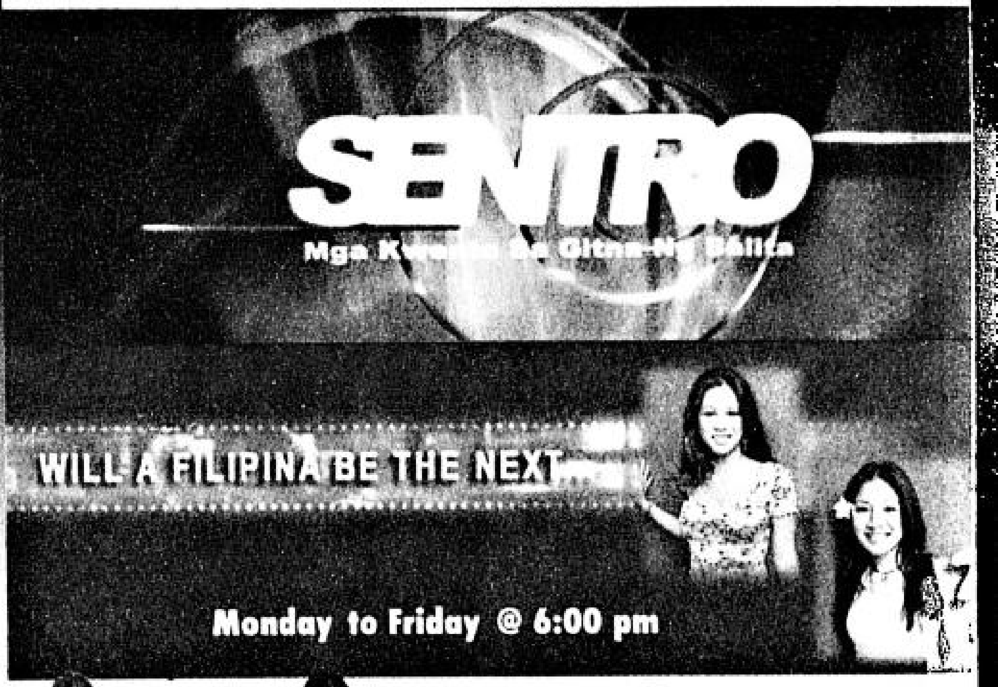
GAGSTERS

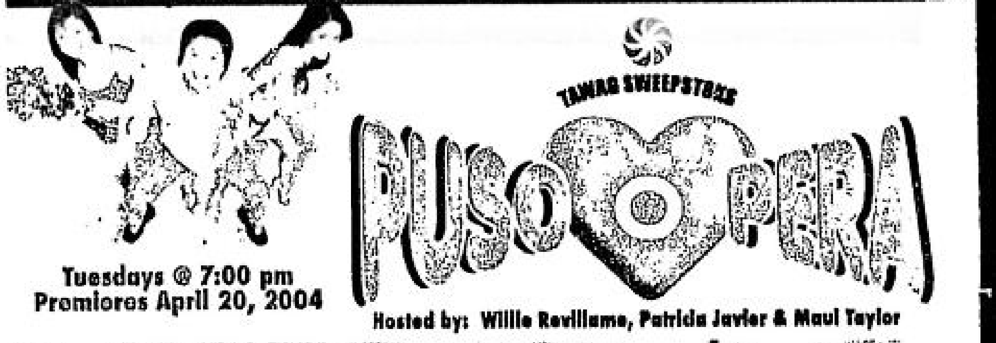
Mondays @ 7:00 pm

Combines the best elements of 'Candid Camera' and 'Mission Impossible' and adds one magical ingredient...kids!

The Search For
BUHAY
BEAUT
UEE
Mutya ng Pilipinas 2004

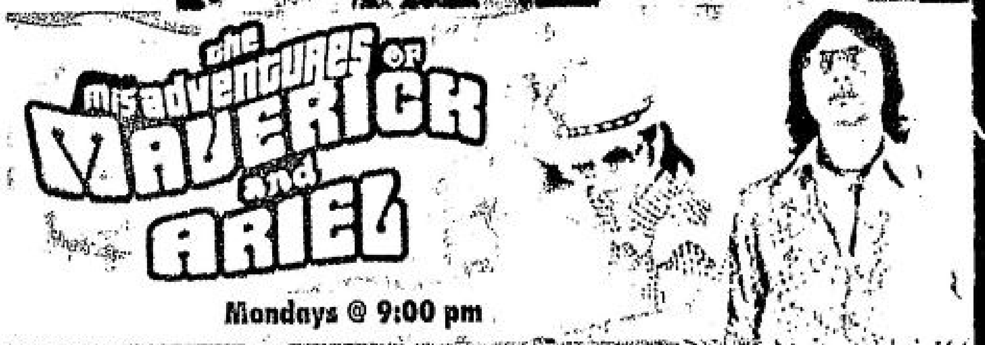

The Chinovela that started it all is back! With never before seen episodes.
Am
TW
Scent of love

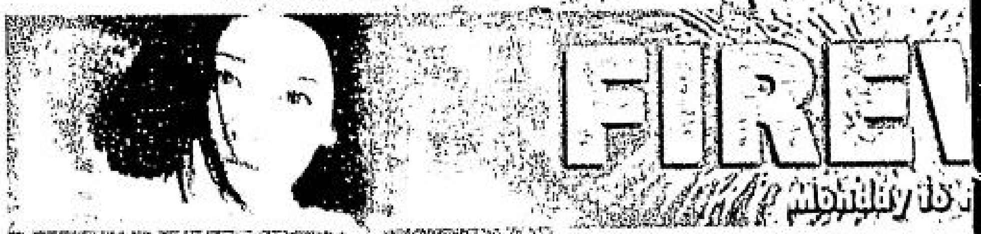

SENTRO
Mga Kwento Sa Gitna Ng Balita
WILL A FILIPINA BE THE NEXT...
Monday to Friday @ 6:00 pm

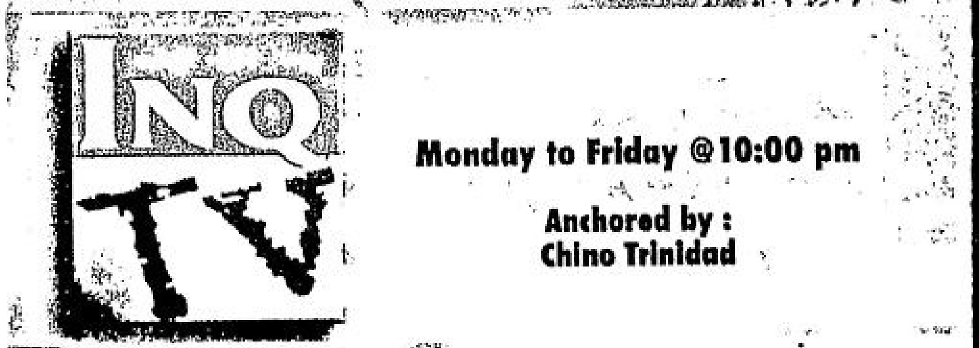

TAWAG SWEEPSTAKES
PUSO O PERA
Tuesdays @ 7:00 pm
Premieres April 20, 2004
Hosted by: Willie Revillame, Patricia Javier & Maui Taylor

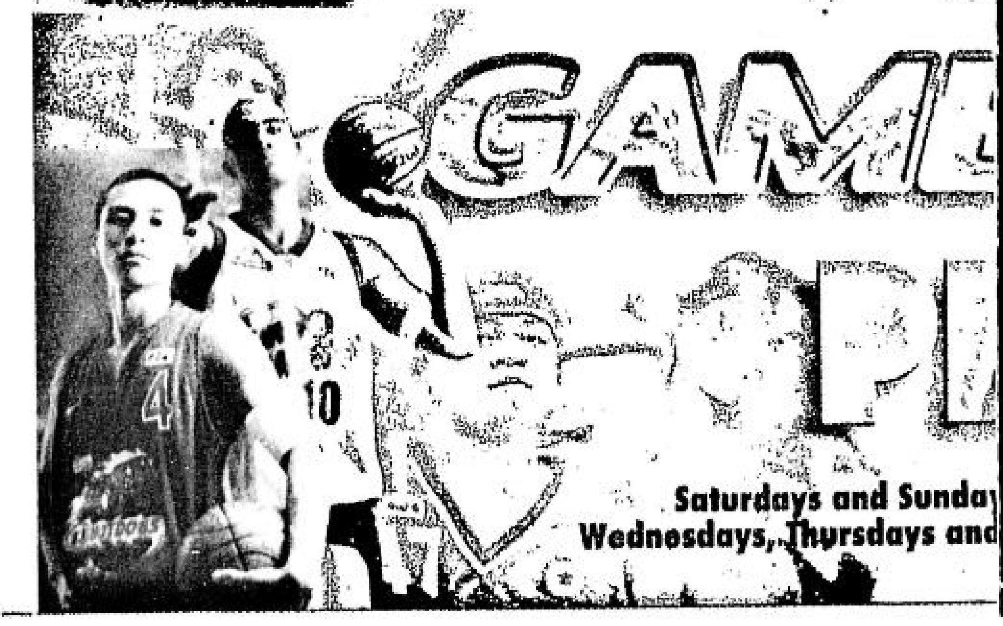
REC
Gagsters!
Mondays 7:00 pm

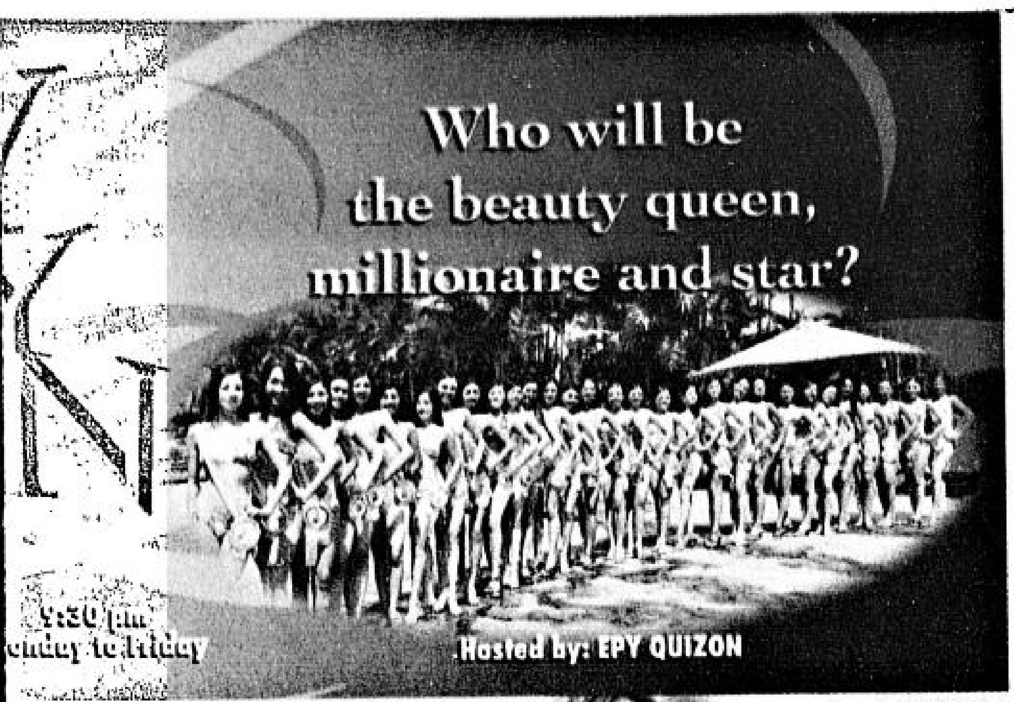
Sing Galing
The Trio-oke


the misadventures of MAVERICK and ARIEL
Mondays @ 9:00 pm


FIRE
Monday to


INQ TV
Monday to Friday @10:00 pm
Anchored by : Chino Trinidad


GAM
P
Saturdays and Sunda
Wednesdays, Thursdays and

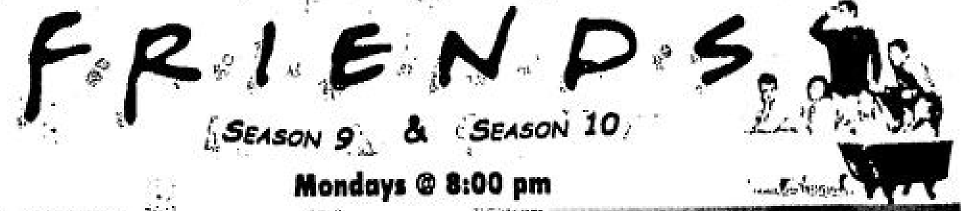

Who will be the beauty queen, millionaire and star?
9:30 pm
onday to Friday
Hosted by: EPY QUIZON

azing
VINS
Monday to Friday
4:30 pm
Monday
to Friday
5:00 pm

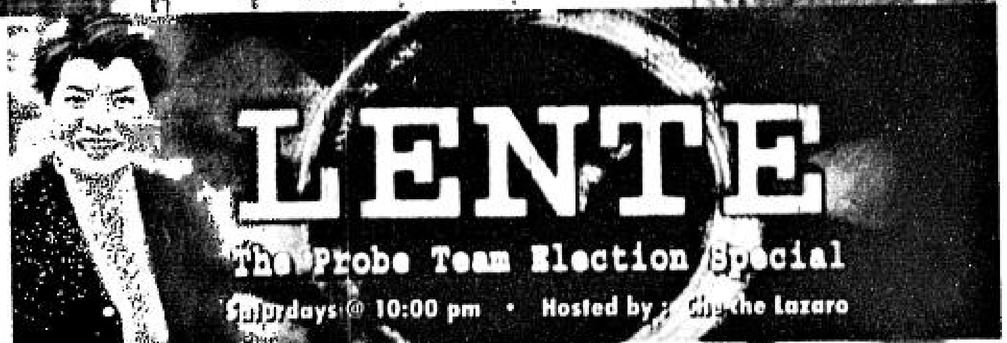
Anchored by :
ALI SOTTO at JOHN SUSI
Monday to Friday
5:30 pm

American Idol
Series 3

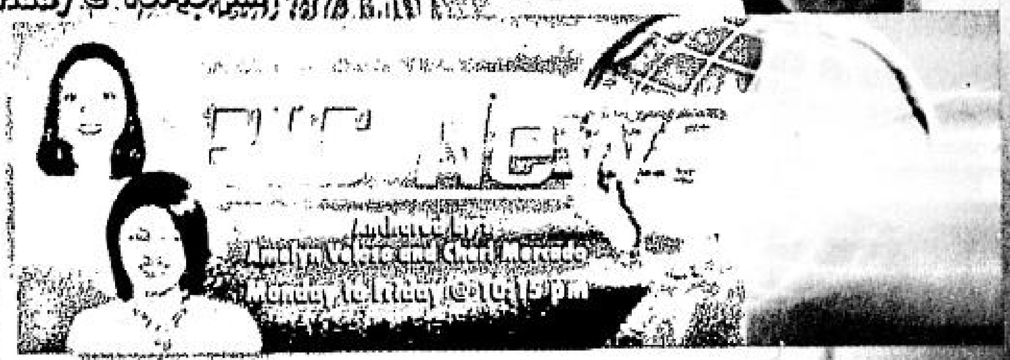
WOW
mali
Tuesdays
8:00 pm
Hosted by:
Joey de Leon

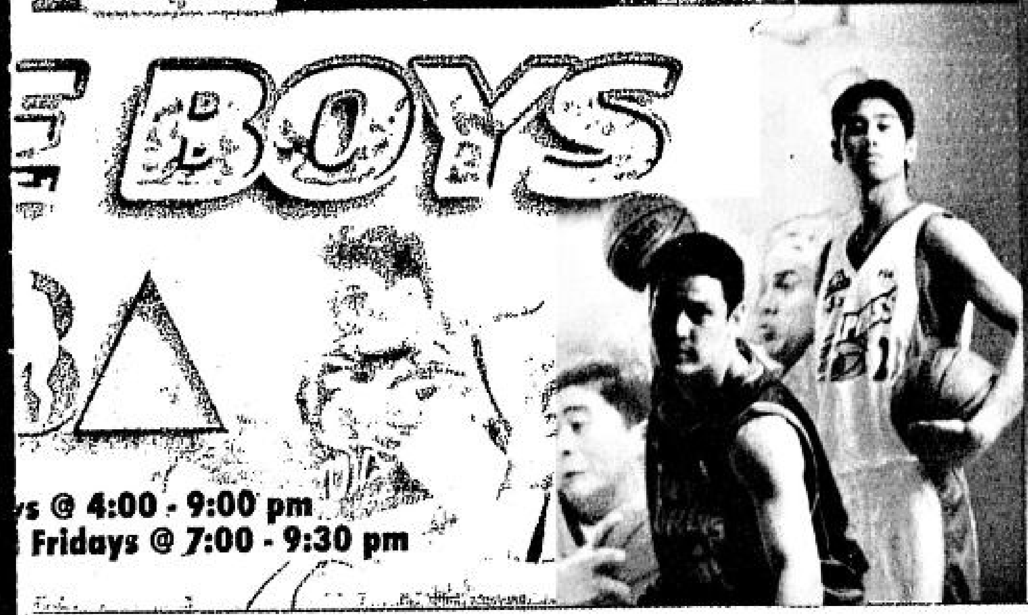

FRIENDS
Season 9 & Season 10
Mondays @ 8:00 pm

showdown
Saturdays @ 9:00 pm
Hosted by :
Ai-ai delas Alas & John Lapus


LENTE
The Probe Team Election Special
Saturdays @ 10:00 pm • Hosted by : Che-che Lazaro

WORKS
Friday @ 10:45 pm

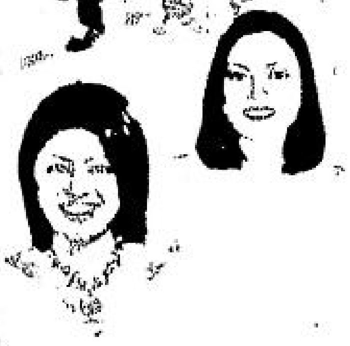

Anchored by :
Amelyn Veloso and Cheri Mercado
Monday to Friday @ 10:15 pm


BOYS
s @ 4:00 - 9:00 pm
Fridays @ 7:00 - 9:30 pm

MAVERICK AND ARIEL

Mondays @ 9:00 pm

Ang icon ng "kaibahan" patuloy na maghahasik ng ibang klaseng katatawanan.



BIG NEWS

Monday to Friday @ 10:15 p.m.
Anchored by : AMELYN VELOSO and CHERI MERCADO

Ngayon, ang longest-running news program ay nasa wikang Pilipino na rin. Tampok ang bagong tandem nina Amelyn at Cheri.

"LENTE"
The Probe Team Election Special

Saturdays @ 10:00 pm
Hosted by : Che-che Lazaro

Dokumentaryo at tele-drama, pinagsama. The Probe team focuses on election issues in this 13-part documentary/drama. A first of its kind!

INQ.TV

Monday to Friday @10:00 pm
Anchored by : Chino Trinidad

Mga ulat-pangmulat mula sa nangungunang dyaryo sa bansa. Gabi-gabi, may napapanahong paksa, survey at talakayan.

WOW MALI!

Tuesdays @ 8:00 pm
Hosted by: Joey de Leon

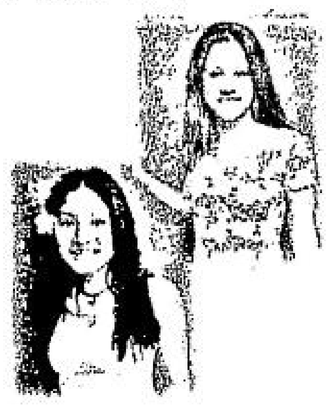
SING-GALING
The Trio-oke Showdown

Saturdays @ 9:00 p.m.
Hosted by : Ai-ai delas Alas & John Lapus

FRIENDS

Mondays @ 8:00 pm

All original episodes. Seasons 9 & 10 of the most popular FRIENDS on primetime TV is now here!



AMERICAN IDOL
Season 3

Monday to Friday @ 6:00 pm

Ano pang mas exciting than watching our own "kababayan" make it sa pinaka-popular at original na reality star-search sa Hollywood? Abangan ang paglabas nina Jasmine Trias at Camile Velasco, dalawang Pinay-American para makipagtagisan ng galing sa mga Kano!

NEW PRIMETIME SCHEDULE

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4:00P		SAILORMOON / GAME CHANNEL EXTREME (Starting April 26)					
4:30		AMAZING TWINS					
5:00		SCENT OF LOVE					
5:30		SENTRO					
6:00		AMERICAN IDOL					
6:30	PBA						PBA
7:00							
7:30		GAGSTERS	PUSO O PERA				
8:00		FRIENDS	WOW MALI		PBA		
8:30		SINGLE					
9:00		Maverick & Ariel	ON-AIR				
9:30	VIVA CINE IDOLS	BUHAY BEAUTY QUEEN					SING-GALING
10:00		INQUIRER TV DAILY					LENTE
10:15		BIG NEWS					
10:45		FIREWORKS					
11:15	ABC ONSTAGE						ABC TREATS
11:45		TBA					
12:45A							

Ibahin mo ang channel mo!

ABC

Iba tayo

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Iba tayo

by Roberto V. Barreiro Managing Director, ABMC

Roberto V. Barreiro
Managing Director, ABMC
Head of Entertainment &
News & Public Affairs Divisions, ABC

Dan Albert S. de Padua
Programming &
News & Public Affairs Executive

The giant networks are force-feeding viewers undistinguished and indistinguishable programs. The same old stuff. Following a conventional schedule. With a rigodon of over-exposed artistas. Saying the same predictable things.

ABC offers a fresh alternative across the board.

For the young and youthful crowd who feel the need to rebel against the establishment, ABC is new and on-the-edge, fun and irreverent, vital and action-packed. ABC has Attitude.

For the stay-at-home or stuck-at-home people who are bored with the routine and ordinary, ABC represents delightful variety and unexpected innovation. Out-of-the-box and off-the-wall, ABC brings back Entertainment to television.

For the dreamers and achievers, who aspire for better things and better days, ABC is going for quality and excellence--the most interesting, the most engaging, the Best from here and abroad.

For all those who believe they're unique, ABC is different, too, like you. [For advertisers and agencies, ABC proposes to deliver a whole new set of eyeballs that haven't been reached before or often enough.]

Think of us at ABC as your barkada. We won't be presumptuous and call ourselves your relatives when we know we're not. Nor will we pretend we have the same heart as you do. (Ano ba talaga 'yon?) We won't preach to you or lecture you or obligate you or shed crocodile tears for you. That's not what friends do. But if you need to take a break, if you want to get out and let go, if you want adventure and maybe a little mischief, if you want to be real for a change, if you want to be with people like you ... your ABC Barkada is here for you.

We're not big. We're a clique, a faction, a tight circle of friends. Pero, hoy, ibahin n'yo 'to. We're not weak or helpless. Our barkada is our lifestyle refuge, our home outside the house, our fortress against the attack of the clones. We draw strength from our bonds. We revel in our individuality even as we take pride in this hardy band we belong to. You and us. The ABC Barkada. Dahil Iba Tayo.

1 billion to modernize ABC

ABC's new management team, led by its Engineering Development & Operations Division, is laying the groundwork for a highly-competitive, cutting-edge television station along a modernization plan expected to be completed by 2005 at a cost of over a billion pesos. The company-wide modernization plan encompasses the whole process end to end. Phase 1 is now on stream.

SIGNAL IMPROVEMENT

Top priority is optimum coverage and TV signal reception. To achieve this, ABC will boost its transmitter power and improve its antenna to maximize signal strengths in Mega Manila. It will also upgrade transmission power in Davao, Cebu, Bacolod, Baguio and Cagayan de Oro.

ABC will also establish new sites. Currently, it has 6 UHF stations and 4 VHF stations. More ABC-owned provincial stations will be established countrywide.

AFFILIATIONS

Coverage is also augmented through affiliations. Adding to its fifteen stations nationwide, ABC recently affiliated with nine more provincial stations, enhancing its presence in Batangas, the Bicol region, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur, Butuan, Palawan and Zamboanga City. Moreover, it has about 150 cable TV affiliates nationwide.

ABC also has a powerful sister company, DREAM Broadcasting, which it can use to deliver a high-quality signal all over the country at a reasonable cost. Now, even small cable companies interested in carrying ABC programming need only acquire a Dream Box which will enable them to receive ABC programs from Manila. DREAM TV is digital all throughout, and therefore of high-quality.

Earlier, ABC entered into a partnership with RMN (Radio Mindanao Network) which now simulcasts ABC's news programs.

In another development, ABC is set to close an agreement with Echostar, the largest direct-to-home (DTH) satellite television company in the US, to telecast ABC programs in America.It will be called The Mabuhay Channel.

NEWS MODERNIZATION

To gain a new competitive advantage, ABC has converted from analog production to digital technology enabling it to enjoy unparalleled newsgathering and production capabilities. ABC is now equipped with tape-less or digital disk-based cameras, which use an optical disk for storage rather than tapes. ABC is only second to China to use it in the region, and the first to use it in the Philippines. For remote broadcast capabilities, ABC will be equipped with SNG vans and portable antennas or SNG fly-aways.

The entire news process will be server-based, thus every aspect will be fully automated and news will be gathered, stored, accessed, produced and delivered fast by a system that binds everything. All editing will be non-linear and file-based instead of tape based.

LOCAL PRODUCTION UPGRADES

This functionality in news will also be translated to local production. To improve the quality of all locally produced shows, ABC will be using the same cameras as those used by News as well as lipstick or hidden cameras where required. Post-production will use non-linear editing. Eventually, like news, it will have a fully integrated end-to-end system. There is an on-going comprehensive training and certification program to train and retool end-users on new technologies.

The Management Team

Hans R. Montenegro, *Director for Human Resources*
Herminio L. Dar Santos, *SVP for Administration*
Terra J. Daffon, *SVP for Corporate Affairs*
Atty. Christine C. Ona, *VP for Legal*
Victorino P. Vianzon, *VP for Programs Acquisition*

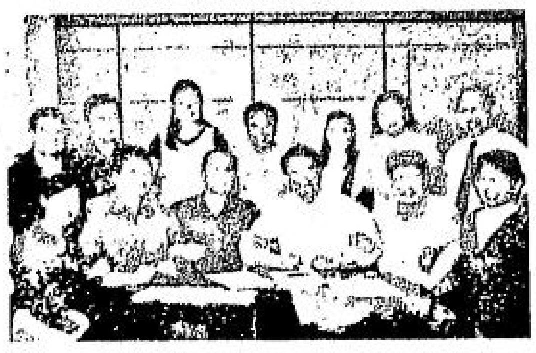
Engr. Domingo M. Nabong, *VP for Engineering*
Jose B. Javier, *VP for News & Public Affairs*
Vivian C. Recio, *VP for Local Production*
Engr. Jose Elmer S. Lorenzo
Director - Engineering Development & Operations Group
Darwin S. Hortel, *SVP for Station Operations*

Edgar P. Barcial, *VP for Merchandising*
Ronald Q. Arciga, *Supervisor, Programs Research*
Ceferino M. Basilio, *VP for Provincial Network Operations*
Ma. Luisa V. Villacorta, *VP for Finance*
Danilo A. Basa, *Manager, Traffic*

Marc S. Gorospe, *VP for FM Radio*
Ma. Luisa B. Lao, *VP for Audit*
Pierre Paul S. Buhay, *Chief Finance Officer - ABMC*

[illegible] - The First Months

ABC under AOC (Cojuangco) delivered its opening salvo at the Ad Congress in Baguio last November with a special themed Fresh.



Barely three months after the Cojuangco group took over ABC, the new management concluded the CBA with the employees union.

Two groups both in transition but aggressively pushing to find a position forged a partnership to make a stronger and more dynamic PBA. Now, the PBA Fiesta Conference 2004 is no longer just a basketball game but an arena of drama and conflict.

The PBA Rookie Draft yielded a new breed of Superstars, the Gameboys, incredibly talented and with superstar good looks.

ABC partners with Philippine Radio Corporation to be the official radio carrier of the PBA 2004 Fiesta Conference.

Veteran broadcast journalist Cheche Lazaro boosts the stocks of ABC News & Public Affairs.

ABC finds a strategic content partner in the Philippine Daily Inquirer which produces INQ TV, an in-depth look at today's big stories.

News & Public Affairs producers, reporters, and writers took a refresher course on news reporting for television under the tutelage of Probe Media Foundation, Inc.

Trade launch - Boracay Beach Party at the Shangri-la.